# HOSPITALLER PIETY AND CRUSADER PROPAGANDA

*Guillaume Caoursin's Description of the Ottoman Siege of Rhodes, 1480*

Theresa M. Vann
and
Donald J. Kagay

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**Theresa M. Vann and Donald J. Kagay**

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# Preface

In the spring and summer of 1480, an Ottoman fleet besieged the main convent of the Order of the Hospital located on the island of Rhodes. The Hospitallers, under the command of Master Pierre d'Aubusson, resisted the siege until the arrival of a fleet from Sicily forced the Ottoman Turks to withdraw. The vice-chancellor of the Order, a layman named Guillaume Caoursin, wrote an eyewitness account of the siege in Latin entitled *Descriptio obsidione Rhodie.* Before the end of the year, the printer Ernst Ratdolt published Caoursin's description of the siege of Rhodes in a twenty-four page booklet. The siege had sparked intense interest in western Europe, and two other eyewitnesses published their first-hand accounts. But these lacked the stamina of Caoursin's *Descriptio,* which enjoyed the institutional support of the Order of the Hospital. It became a best seller. Seven additional Latin editions were published before 1500, and it was translated into English, Italian, Danish, and German. Caoursin's history received wide acceptance as the official history of the events of the siege; less well appreciated were the motives behind its composition. The Order had commissioned the book to help it raise money to rebuild the city of Rhodes following the siege. Caoursin, who had been educated in Paris and was familiar with humanist scholarship on the continent, wrote the *Descriptio* to portray the Knights of the Hospital as the heroes of Christendom in the conflict against the Turks.[1] Its publication spurred the sale of indulgences for the relief of Rhodes.

This book began when I recommended that the Malta Study Center purchase a copy of the Radolt edition of Guillaume Caoursin's *Descriptio obsidione Rhodie,* printed in Venice, 1480. It was my first major purchase as a curator, and I feverishly documented the reasons why the Center should buy the copy. It was easy to establish to the satisfaction of my director and a donor that it was an important work, one that should be in the collection of a center devoted to the history of the Order of the Hospital. Caoursin is frequently cited as a major source for the history of the Order, the later crusades in the eastern Mediterranean, and fifteenth-century warfare. After I established that our Library did not have a copy or reproduction in its possession, I found, to my surprise, that there was no modern Latin critical edition. In the absence of a readily-available Latin text, many researchers relied upon a fifteenth-century English translation that, through reprints and facsimiles, was more readily available than the Latin text. Even if scholars had access to the original published editions, they had difficulty reading the typeface or appreciating the challenges posed by incunabula.

It seemed to me that a new Latin edition of Caoursin, combined with a modern English translation, would be useful for students and scholars of the fifteenth century. After I began work, however, I realized that Caoursin's *Descriptio* did not simply augment the archival records. It was designed and composed to help the Order of the Hospital raise money against the return of the Turkish fleet. Caoursin wrote it in 1480 as the official narrative for others to translate and incorporate into their own works. But it contained themes that Caoursin and the Hospitaller chancery had been developing for years to interpret the Order's activities in the Levant for Christian Europe. My planned volume grew to incorporate related texts that demonstrated the Order's use of historical writing in the service of propaganda. Some were magisterial charters that predated the siege, yet included rhetoric that appeared in Caoursin's *Descriptio*. Then there was Pierre d'Aubusson's own account of the siege, which some attributed to Caoursin; John Kay's familiar fifteenth-century English translation, which contained unsuspected yet significant interpolations; Ademar Dupuis' French eyewitness account that was modeled on Caoursin's text; and, for comparison, Jacobo Curte's independent testimony that presented a different interpretation of events.

Scrutiny of the *Descriptio's* publication history revealed that the Hospitallers purposefully disseminated the official history of the siege using the relatively new technology of printing. In comparison with other early printed books, Caoursin's work survives in numerous copies and editions. European priories commissioned print runs, and individual knights wanted a copy of the book for their own library. The Order recognized Caoursin's *Descriptio* as an essential part of its history, valued as an adjunct to the archival records maintained in the chancery. The volume of the *Liber conciliorum* for the year 1480 contains a note stating that Caoursin's printed book served as the official record of the siege because the Turkish attack had disrupted the chancery's work.[2] This encouraged a tradition among Hospitaller historians of treating the narrative account of the *Descriptio* as the equivalent of archival documentation of the siege. The tradition began with Giacomo Bosio, the sixteenth-century historian of the Order, who enjoyed unprecedented access to the organization's archives. Bosio retold Caoursin's account of the siege in his *Dell'Istoria delta Sacra Religione di San Giovanni Gierosolimitano*.[3] His confirmation of the *Descriptio* as the official record, combined with the *Liber conciliorum's* endorsement of its credibility, enshrined Caoursin's report as an unbiased primary source. Then the eighteenth-century historian René Aubert de Vertôt combined Bosio's description of the siege with Ademar Dupuis' French version to write his own synthesis of the siege of Rhodes.[4] Vertôt's history, translated into English and reprinted many times, added a new layer of interpretation and errors that became part of the story of the siege. Most notable was his

invention of a new weapon, "le tribute," or, as in the English translation of Vertôt, "The Tribute."[5] The weapon was the trebuchet, which had been commonly used in medieval warfare but was becoming obsolete by the late fifteenth century. Vertôt obviously did not recognize the word or the weapon.

Twentieth-century historians relied upon Bosio's and Vertôt's retelling of Caoursin's *Descriptio,* which they treated as a primary source. Kenneth Setton, for example, relied heavily upon Vertôt for his description of the 1480 siege of Rhodes, although he also included d'Aubusson's report (which he treated as a separate entity despite his recognition of its similarities to Caoursin) and Dupuis.[6] Setton repeated Vertôt's mistake about The Tribute, but did not cite his source for it.[7] Setton was more critical about the narrative sources' interpretation of the events of the siege. He objected particularly to the role of divine intervention, but found no alternative interpretation in the limited sample of published magisterial bulls available to him in Sebastiano Paoli's eighteenth-century *Codice diplomatico.*[8]

Robert Schwoebel recognized the influence of humanistic rhetoric upon Caoursin's writing, but his primary intent was to combine Caoursin, Dupuis, and Curte to create a comprehensive narrative of the siege.[9] Lionel Butler returned to Caoursin's original edition and to d'Aubusson's letters about the siege.[10] Other historians cited John Kay's translation as Caoursin's actual words. A. W. Pollard retold the story as an illustrated summary of the siege using the woodcuts from the Ulm edition of 1496 and quoting Kay's prose as Caoursin's words, with "translations" into modern English.[11] Eric Brockman's account of the siege relied upon old English translations of Caoursin and of d'Aubusson's letter.[12]

This volume presents the archival evidence for the financial state of the Order prior to the siege; the need for the convent of Rhodes to justify its expenses and mission to its western priories and to Europe; and the development of an image of the knights as the defenders of Christendom through the use of rhetoric and the interpretation of history. It includes Latin editions and English translations of Caoursin, d'Aubusson, and Curte's accounts of the siege. In addition, it reprints two contemporary versions of Caoursin, Kay's English translation and Dupuis' French version. The appendix consists of magisterial bulls relating to preparations for a siege and the siege itself from the Archives of the Knights of Malta.

Since I began work on the edition, the internet resources for early printed books improved considerably. The 1496 Ulm edition is now available online. Then in 2007 Marios Philippides published what purported to be a transcription of the 1480 Rome edition, with an accompanying English translation.[13] This was disheartening. Although neither of us was aware of the other s project, we had set out with similar aims: to publish an important Latin

text with a modern English translation. Once I could bear to study his edition closely, however, I realized that his Latin transcription extensively "corrected" Caoursin's Latin grammar, omitted an important section of the text, and otherwise contained innumerable misreadings of the incunable's typeface. I did not rejoice over the errors of another, but I was relieved that my work was neither wasted nor superfluous.

This book took many years and much assistance. I am responsible for the introductory chapters, the transcriptions, the editorial work, and the French translation. My collaborator, Donald J. Kagay, and I worked together on the Latin translations, and he reviewed the rest of the book. I defer to his knowledge of Latin military terminology. Paul E. Chevedden answered many questions about siege warfare. Susan Noakes steered me through Ademar Dupuis' medieval French, and Kelly DeVries helped me above and beyond the call of duty; anything still tangled up is entirely my own doing. Laurent Vissière generously shared with me the bibliographic citations he found of still more manuscript copies of Caoursin. His publication on the subject came out as this volume was going to press. I am pleased that we used similar methodology to establish the text, and happy that he and his co-author translated the works into French, not English! My research was supported by the Malta Study Center of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. Joseph S. Micallef, who established the Malta Curatorship at HMML, has been steadfast in his support of this project. Five months in Malta on a Fulbright enabled me to comb the archives of the Knights of Malta, with the assistance of Dr. Maroma Camilleri. Numerous libraries and librarians helped me, among them Pamela Willis of the Museum and Library of St. John's Gate; Barbara Henry, rare books librarian and keeper of the Foster Stearns Collection, Catholic University, Washington DC; and Margarite Ragnow, of the James Ford Bell Library of the University of Minnesota. I received assistance from the rare book and manuscript collections of the Library of Congress, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Houghton Library of Harvard University, the British Library, and the rare book collection of the University of Malta. Portions of this volume appeared in papers and proceedings from the International Medieval Congresses at Kalamazoo and Leeds, the Military Orders conferences at London and Budapest, and the Texas Medieval Organization, which recognizes no boundaries. My colleagues at HMML, Wayne Torborg, and Kelly Booth, prepared the digital images for publication. Dr. John Smedley of Ashgate Publishing was both patient and supportive as deadlines came and went. I thank, too, the anonymous second reader who provided excellent guidance. In addition, numerous friends and colleagues listened patiently and offered good advice at every stage of the project. Any errors that remain are entirely of my own creation. And, last but not least, no long-suffering partners

were inconvenienced and no understanding offspring suffered parental distraction during the research and writing of this volume. No animals were hurt in its creation, although some domestic pets were forcibly dislodged from sleeping on books or dissuaded from chewing research materials.

1 See Theresa M. Vann, "Guillaume Caoursin's *Descriptio obsidione Rhodiae* and the Archives of the Knights of Malta." *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity,* edited by Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky (Budapest, 2001), pp. 109–20, for a discussion of Caoursin and humanism.

2 Archive of the Order of Malta [hereafter AOM] *76, Liber condliorum Cardinalis Magistri Petri D'aubusson. Ann. 1478–1488,* f. 35r (old enumeration) f. 50r (new enumeration).

3 Giacomo Bosio, *Dell'Istoria della Sacra Religione et Illma Militia di S. Giovanni Gierosolimitano,* Rome, 1629, Volume 2, pp. 400–422. For Bosio and his influence, see Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers' Historical Activities: 1400–1530," in *Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusades 1291–1440* (London, 1982), no. II, pp. 145–150. Bosio used the Ulm, 1496 edition of Carousin's Rhodiorum historia which survives in the National Library of Malta (Incunabulum 12). Before this volume passed into Bosio's possession it originally belonged to Fra Sabba da Castiglione, who had been in Rhodes around 1505. On the flyleaf, Bosio recorded: "Questo libro, per ogni ragione, debbe essere grandemente stimato da ogni Huome di giudicio, e di valore; non solamente perche piu uenale non si trova; mà per essere stato del venerabile, e santo Cavaliero Fra Sabba Castiglione Comendatore di Faenza. Onde da me, come una pretiosa Giora, è tenuto. Carrissimo + Jacomo Bosio." For a catalog description of this particular volume, see Anthony Luttrell, "Guillaume Caorsin, Obsidionis rhodiae urbis descriptio (Ulm, 1496)," in *The Order's Early Legacy in Malta,* edited by John Azzopardi (Valletta, 1989), p. 83.

4 René d'Aubert de Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jérusalem,* 4 volumes (Paris, 1726), 2:303–353.

5 *Idem, History of the Knights of Malta,* 4 volumes (Edinburgh, 1757), 2:64.

6 Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571,* 4 volumes (Philadelphia, 1976), 2:346–363.

7 Ibid., 2:357.

8 Sebastiano Paoli, *Codice diplomatico del Sacro militare ordine gerosolimitano oggi di Malta,* 2 volumes (Lucca, 1733–1737).

9 Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: the Renaissance Image of the Turk, 1453–1517* (New York, 1967), pp. 122–129,

10 Lionel Butler, "The Siege of Rhodes, 1480" (London: Grand Priory in the British Realm of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, n.d.)

11 A. W. Pollard, "The Siege of Rhodes," *The Library* (New Series, series 2) 7 (1906): 422–436.

12 Eric Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes, 1480–1522* (London, 1969).

13 Marios Philippides, *Mehmed II The Conqueror and the Fall of the Franco-Byzantine Levant to the Ottoman Turks: Some Western Views and Testimonies* (Tempe, 2007), pp. 45–46, 261–313.

# Chapter 1
# The Hospitallers and Rhodes

## A Brief Description of the Order of the Hospital

The Order of the Hospital is a military religious organization that began as a pilgrim's hospice in the city of Jerusalem before the arrival of the First Crusade in 1099. The Order received papal recognition in 1113 and assumed military responsibilities for the Christian states in the Latin East during the twelfth century. Like the Order of the Temple, the Knights of the Hospital (or Hospitallers) defended pilgrims and the Latin settlements in the east. The two Orders became international corporations headquartered in the Latin East that received grants of property in western Europe in addition to their lands in the Levant. An essential difference between the Hospitallers and the Templars, however, was that the Hospitallers operated a large hospital for the sick and pilgrims at their central convent and dedicated a substantial percentage of their revenues for its upkeep. After the last Latin outpost in the east, Acre, fell in 1291, both the Templars and the Hospitallers relocated their central convents. The Templars withdrew their headquarters to France, where in 1307 Philip the Fair of France outlawed the organization and its members, putting many of them on trial; by 1312 Pope Clement V suppressed the Order. The Hospitallers remained in the eastern Mediterranean, spending a brief period on Cyprus and undertaking the conquest of the island of Rhodes, which they completed by 1310.[1] The Order located its central convent within the city of Rhodes, free from the jurisdiction of any temporal or diocesan power other than the papacy. The decision to conquer Rhodes and to establish the central convent there was an important factor in the survival of the Order of the Hospital, and enabled it to evolve as a sovereign entity on Rhodes and later on Malta.

The essential governmental structures of the Order of the Hospital were already established when it arrived at Rhodes. The head of the Order, the master, was elected for life. His advisors, who formed part of the master's council, were the chief officials of the Order: the conventual prior, the grand preceptor, the hospitaller, the marshal, the admiral, the *turcopolier,* the draper,

and the grand bailiff, hi addition to his council, the master could summon the chapter general to meet at Rhodes. The chapter general was the general assembly of the Order, which discussed major issues such as finance, legislation, and warfare.[2] The attendees of the chapter general were the master, the senior members of the order, its chief officials, and two representatives from each priory. According to statute, the master had to call a meeting of the chapter general at least once every five years, but it could meet more frequently if the master thought it necessary. At the meetings of the chapter general, the master and the chapter heard petitions and generated decisions, edicts, and statutes that were binding upon all the members of the Order.[3]

The members of the Hospitaller Order living on Rhodes were Europeans who had joined the Order in one of its priories in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, or England. They had been accepted into the Order as either a brother, chaplain, or knight. All had taken vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the master. Most men joined the Order as serving brothers, who performed a variety of tasks, or as brother sergeants-at-arms, fighting men of free, but not necessarily knightly, birth. The knights, who with the sergeants-at-arms fought 0n behalf of the Order, held all the high offices of the Order. Although they did not have to "prove" their nobility until a later period, a candidate had to be of legitimate, knightly birth. Knights had higher status than the chaplains, the ordained priests who tended to the spiritual needs of the members of the Order. Women could join the Order, but they remained in European convents; they did not serve in the Order's hospitals or fight in its battles.[4]

The Hospitallers of Rhodes received income from their estates in the eastern Mediterranean (including sizeable properties on Cyprus, some formerly belonging to the Templars) and collected revenue from the coastal trade that passed through their harbors. The Order organized its properties in Europe and in the eastern Mediterranean into the units of commandery, priory, and langue. The commandery, usually an estate, was the basic unit of Hospitaller property. It provided a benefice for a knight or a sergeant-at-arms, and also contributed to the yearly dues, called *responsions,* that each priory paid for the support of the central convent. The priories were larger administrative units that consisted of a number of commanderies, organized by region and headed by a prior. At some point before 1310, the Order organized its priories according to langues (also called "tongues" or "nations"). The knight's place of birth determined his langue affiliation. Initially there were seven langues: St. Gilles (or Provence), Auvergne, France, Spain, Italy, England (which included Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) and Germany. In 1462 the Order divided the Spanish langue into two parts, Aragon and Castile.

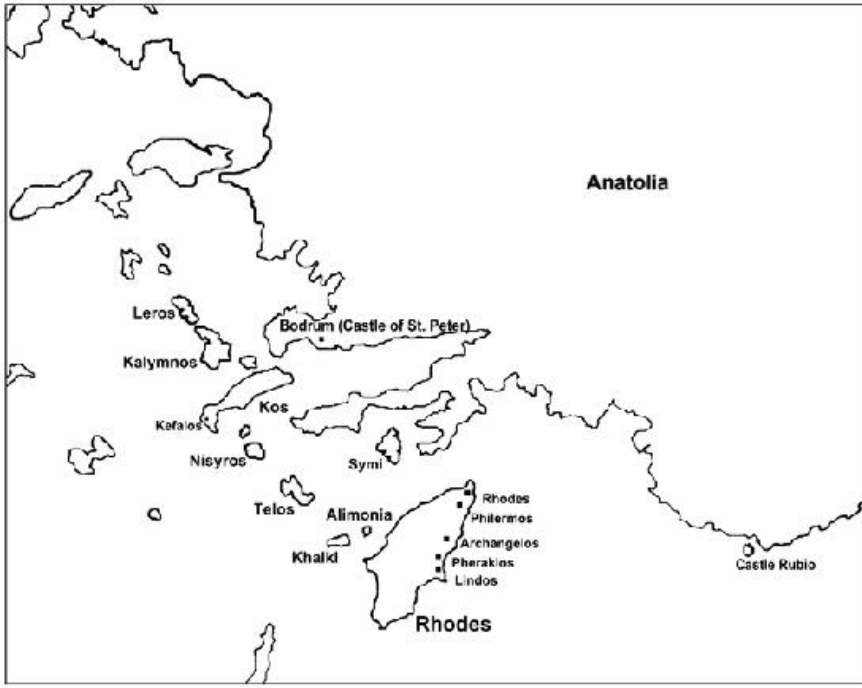



Figure 1.1 Map of Rhodes in the Eastern Mediterranean, showing Hospitaller possessions in the Dodecanese. (© Theresa Vann)

By the fourteenth century, the chief offices of the Order were assigned by langue, except for the conventual prior, who supervised the conventual chaplains.[5] The bailiff of Province traditionally held the office of grand preceptor, who functioned as the master's second-in-command. The bailiff of France held the office of the hospitaller, who ran the infirmary. The bailiff of Auvergne was the marshal, or chief military officer. The bailiff of Italy was the admiral, who commanded the fleet of the Order. The bailiff of England was the *turcopolier,* who commanded mounted mercenary troops. The bailiff of Aragon was the draper, who originally issued clothing, fabric and alms and later provisioned the Order's military forces. The bailiff of Germany held the office of grand bailiff, overseeing the fortifications of outposts such as the castle of Bodrum.[6] When Master Pedro Raimundo de Zacosta created the langue of Castile in 1462, he elevated the office of the chancellor to a seat on the council, where it became the bailiwick of the new langue.

# A Brief Description of the Island of Rhodes

Figure 1.2 The Marine Gate, Rhodes. (Photo: Theresa Vann)

Rhodes is one of a string of islands that lies off the coast of eastern Anatolia in the Aegean Sea. Culturally, medieval Rhodes was a Greek island, nominally part of the Byzantine empire until the Hospitallers captured it. The crescent-shaped city of Rhodes, famous in ancient times as the site of the Colossus of Rhodes, is located on the northeastern end of the island. It encircles a natural harbor, divided by three artificial moles into two smaller anchorages. These moles, considered of "great antiquity" in the fifteenth century, created a small harbor (the Mandraki) for the galleys of the Order and a larger, commercial harbor for trade. The Order built three towers on the ends of the moles to defend the port: the tower of the Windmills (also known as the tower of St. Peter and later, the tower of France) on the mole of the windmills; the tower of St. Nicholas on the mole by the Mandraki, and the tower of Naillac on the mole separating the two. The Order slung a chain between the moles to protect the harbors.[7] In addition to the city of Rhodes, the Hospitallers built and maintained a complex system of watchtowers and strongholds throughout the island.[8]

Modern Rhodes is still encircled by medieval walls, but the present day visitor looking for the landmarks of the siege will have a difficult time finding them. The siege of 1480 and the earthquake the following year altered the topography of the city. In addition, the Order pulled down many churches near the walls immediately after the siege. One of these was the chapel of St. Anthony; the modern Latin church standing on the spot today is believed to be in the approximate location of the earlier structure. D'Aubusson rebuilt and augmented the walls after the 1480 siege, and much of the current arrangement

of gates and towers dates from between 1481 and 1522, During the Ottoman occupation the Turks recycled Christian monuments and the identification of many churches and inns became disassociated from their sites. Nineteenth-century earthquakes changed the profile of the tower of St. Nicholas and destroyed the tower of Naillac, which had a distinctive circular lookout located on each one of its top four corners. An explosion of unknown origin in 1856 destroyed the conventual church and severely damaged the magisterial palace. The conventual church was not rebuilt, although portions of its foundations remain and fragments from it may be identified in other buildings in the old city of Rhodes. The magisterial palace that visitors see today was recreated by Italian architects in the 1930s on the remains of the original structure. Over the centuries the fosse filled with garbage and Ottoman cemeteries were located outside the walls of the city. The cemeteries remain; in the late twentieth century, the fosse was cleared of garbage and reborn as a public park. The new city of Rhodes now surrounds the old city, overlaying the location of the Turkish camp during the siege.[9]

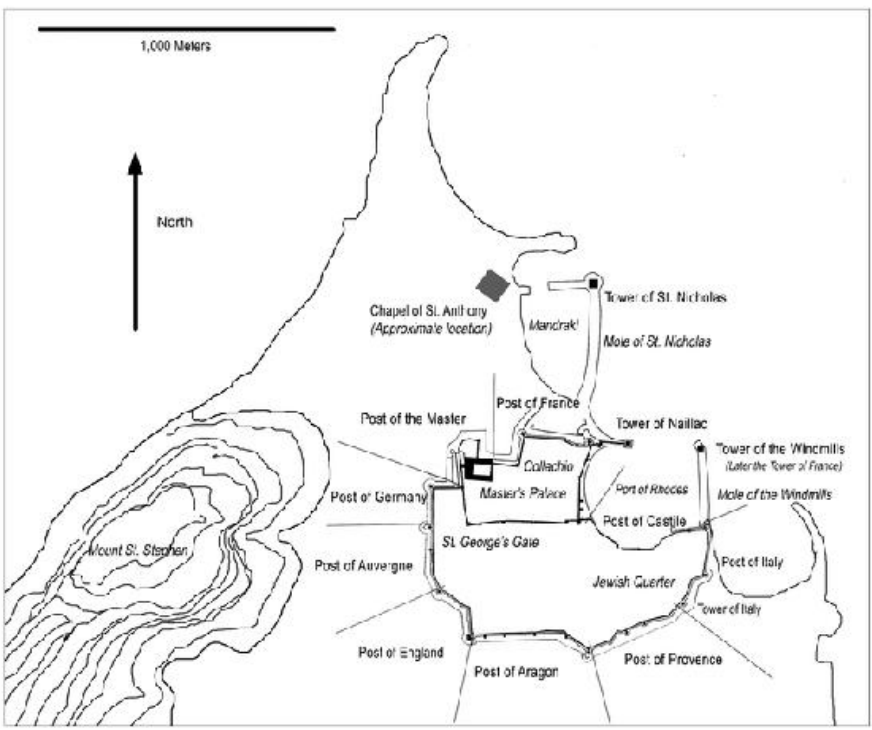



Figure 1.3 Map of the city of Rhodes and its surroundings. Adapted from Albert *Gabriel,La cité de Rhodes: MCCX-MDXXII,* 2 vols. (Paris, 1921–1923).

In the fifteenth century, the statutes of the Order required its members to

live in the *collachio,* a separate walled quarter within the walls of Rhodes. Each langue maintained an *auberge,* or inn, which provided accommodations for visiting knights; knights resident in Rhodes did not necessarily live in community. The modern visitor enters the *collachio* through the Marine Gate, walks past the "new" infirmary (completed after the 1480 siege) and up the "Street of the Knights," which is lined with restored *auberges.* At the top of the street, on the site of the Byzantine citadel, the restored magisterial palace sits within its own walls at the highest point of the city. Opposite the palace stand the ruins of the conventual church. A line may be drawn from the tower of St. Nicholas through the *collachio* up to the magisterial palace. By focusing their assaults upon the tower of St. Nicholas, the Turks could control the harbor and obtain a base to attack the *collachio* and the magisterial palace. When the assault on the tower of St. Nicholas failed, the Turks concentrated on the weakest segment of the city's fortifications, the walls alongside the Jewish quarter of Rhodes, which lacked towers or bastions. Even if the Turks had taken this sector successfully, they still would have had an uphill battle for the *collachio* and the magisterial palace, since the Jewish quarter was located in the lower part of the city. The exact location where the Turks breached the walls was commemorated in 1489 with the construction of a church on the site; recent archeological excavations have uncovered its foundations.[10]

Caoursin's *Descriptio* told little of the appearance of the island and city of Rhodes. It named places that proved important during the siege: the mountain of St. Stephen, from which the Rhodians first sighted the Turks; the Ottomans' landing site, at the foot of the mountain; the enemy camp at the church of St. Anthony (now demolished), located outside the walls; the tower of St. Nicholas, located at the head of the long mole; the place on the city walls where the Turks launched their first foray; the fosse at the magisterial palace, where the traitor Master George first presented himself to the Hospitallers; the tower of St. Peter, which lay in front of the Mandraki; the chapel of the Virgin of Mont Philermo (located outside the city walls); the wall of the Italian station; the church of St. Mary Misericordia; the wall of the Jewish quarter; the Street of the Jews; and the harbor.

D'Aubusson's report focused upon the military significance of each location during the siege and its outcome. He stated that the Turks attacked the city from three directions, destroyed nine towers, and pulled down the magisterial palace. He explained that a successful Ottoman attack upon the mole and tower of St. Nicholas would have given the Turks control over the entrance to the harbor. He noted that the chapel of St. Anthony stood 200 paces to the west of the tower, with the sea in between. The walls of the Jewish quarter faced east, near the fortifications that led to the tower of Italy. Curte also described the city in the context of the siege, using local landmarks as reference points

for the placement of Turkish artillery and reporting the exact location and size of tower of St. Nicholas. Curte revealed that the Turks took advantage of the heights surrounding the city, and that the Post of Italy was the weakest section of the walls. Dupuis initially described Rhodes as a beautiful city and island, well-fortified and well-defended, although he, too, noted that the countryside around the city was well-suited for conducting a siege. Dupuis also supplied the unforgettable image of the destruction of a vat of wine in the Master's cellars. The pilgrim Felix Faber, who arrived in Rhodes on the first Christian ship that entered the harbor after the siege, recorded that the shore was covered with the bodies of dead Turks, and the walls and towers were largely reduced to rubble from the shelling.[11] Other accounts left by fifteenth-century visitors to Rhodes provide some information about the hospital, the conventual church, the magisterial palace, and the city's massive walls.[12]

The accounts of the siege emphasize that the people of Rhodes supported the Order against the Turks. The master ruled over a diverse population of Greek and Latin Christians. Rhodian merchants and Jews lived in the *burgo,* which lay within the walls of the city outside the *collachio.* Some Rhodian families owed a service called the *marinera* which required them to either row in the galley or provide money for a galley; Master Raymond Zacosta, however, revoked this service in 1462.[13] In addition to the native population, merchants, sailors, and pilgrims from throughout the Mediterranean and northern Europe passed through the harbor. The masters issued safe conducts to travelers from Genoa, Catalonia, Alexandria, Syria, Venice, Malta, Turkey, Germany, and Ireland.

Unlike the Italian or Catalan emporia in the eastern Mediterranean, the avowed purpose of the Hospitaller state on Rhodes was the defense of Christendom, not commerce. But the creation and the maintenance of a Hospitaller state was an expensive undertaking, particularly when the Order was required to support papal campaigns launched against Egypt. The Order already carried a heavy burden of debt when Mehmet II became Sultan of the Ottoman Turks and captured Constantinople in 1453. With Constantinople as his base, Mehmet created a new Islamic empire upon the footprint of the former Byzantium, extending his frontiers to central Europe and Persia. The Hospitallers expected Mehmet's fleet to attack Rhodes because of its proximity to Constantinople and began preparations immediately. But first the Knights had to pay their debts. The lack of Treasury records from fifteenth-century Rhodes obscures Hospitaller banking practices that generally obtained money through bills of exchange and various types of loans from western merchants, particularly the Catalans.[14] Records concerning the Order's maritime income from port fees, tolls, and corsairs are absent from its central archives. The clearest record of money raising left by the magisterial household was the

concerted effort to collect the yearly payment of responsions from the western commanderies.

Between 1453 and 1480, the master's secretary and vice-chancellor developed a consistent narrative of events that clearly presented Mehmet as the enemy of the Knights of Rhodes. According to Hospitaller rhetoric, for twenty-seven years Mehmet could think of nothing else but the threat posed by the Knights on Rhodes. Meanwhile, his fleet attacked other Christian-held islands in the eastern Mediterranean. The delay gave the Hospitallers of Rhodes much-needed time to solve their financial problems and to renovate their fortifications.

1 For the history of the Order on Rhodes during this earlier period, see: J. Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers a Rhodes (1310–1421)* (1913; reprint, London, 1974); Anthony Luttrell, *The Hospitaller State on Rhodes and its Western Provinces, 1306–1462* (Aldershot, 1999); idem, *The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Mediterranean World* (London, 1992).

2 Jürgen Sarnowsky, "The Oligarchy at Work: The Chapters General of the Hospitallers in the XVth Century (1421–1522)," in *Autour de la première croisade: Actes du Colloque de la Society for the Study of the Crusades in the Latin East,* ed. Michel Balard (Paris, 1996), pp. 267–76, discusses the role of the chapter general in fifteenth-century Rhodes.

3 Anthony Luttrell, "Intrigue, Schism and Violence among the Hospitallers of Rhodes, 1377–1384," in *Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West (1291–1440)* (London, 1978), pp. 30–48.

4 Helen Nicholson, *The Knights Hospitaller* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 81–84.

5 Jürgen Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft im Johanniterorden des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Münster, 2001), pp. 47–88, describes the structure of the central convent and the administrative relationship between the master and the council in the fifteenth century.

6 Michael Galea, *German Knights of Malta: A Gallery of Portraits* (Valletta, 1986), p. 8.

7 Paris, BN Lat 6067, f. 32r, shows the chain enclosing the commercial harbor of Rhodes during the 1480 siege.

8 Michael Heslop, "The Search for the Defensive System of the Knights in Southern Rhodes," in *The Military Orders* Volume 4: *On Land and by Sea,* ed. Judi Upton Ward (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 189–200.

9 Ongoing archaeological excavations in Rhodes are providingmore information about the medieval city. See: Anna-Maria Kasdagli, Angeliki Katsioti, and Maria Michaelidou, "Archaeology on Rhodes and the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem," in *Archaeology and the Crusades: Proceedings of the Round Table, Nicosia, 1 February 2005,* edited by Peter Edbury and Sophia Kalopissi-Verti (Athens, 2007), pp. 35–62. Anthony Luttrell, *The Town of Rhodes 1306–1356* (Rhodes, 2003), is a reconstruction of the fourteenth-century city based upon archeological and documentary evidence. Albert Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes: MCCX-MDXXII,* 2 vols. (Paris, 1921–1923), remains the most comprehensive survey of the city's fortifications.

10 AOM31,no. 11,14 August 1489.

11 Felix Faber, *The Wanderings of Felix Fabri,* trans. A. Stewart, PPTS (London, 1896), 1, p.

31.

12 Michel Balard, "The Urban Landscape of Rhodes as Perceived by Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Travelers," in *Intercultural Contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean,* ed. B. Arbel (London, 1996), pp. 24–34; Theresa Vann, "Battlefield Tourism: Visitors to Rhodes after the Siege of 1480,"in *The Military Orders 5: Politics and Power,* ed. by Peter Edbury (Farnham, 2012).

13 AOM 372, f. 118v-l 19r, 4 November 1462, Rhodes.

14 Pierre Bonneaud, "La crise financière des Hospitaliers de Rhodes au quinzième siècle (1426–1480)," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 42 (2012):501–534.

# Chapter 2
# Danger from the Great Debt and the Great Turk, 1453–1480

At the beginning of his description of the siege of Rhodes, Caoursin explained that Mehmet's reasons for the attack dated back to his conquest of Constantinople in 1453. According to Caoursin, during the entire twenty-seven years between the fall of Constantinople and the siege of Rhodes, Mehmet thought of nothing else other than the obliteration of the Hospitallers; likewise, the Order remained resolute in its mission to fight the Turks. Certainly the central convent of the Order never lost sight of the danger that Mehmet presented to Rhodes and other Christian islands in the eastern Mediterranean. The mundane tasks of collecting money to maintain and improve the fortifications of Rhodes feature prominently in the magisterial bulls for the period. Between 1453 and 1480, reforms of the Order gave the master and the central convent more systematic control over finances. Rhodes sought cash and goods from the western priories to build fortifications, pay engineers and mercenaries, supply its islands, and maintain its ships. In this period the masters of the Order issued numerous bulls demanding that the western priories provide money, men, and other resources to prepare Rhodes and the eastern Hospitaller preceptories for war. This atmosphere of constant preparation shaped the careers of both Guillaume Caoursin and Pierre d'Aubusson.

## The Order of the Hospital in 1453

The Order of the Hospital was burdened with debt even before Constantinople fell to Mehmet on 29 May 1453. At the beginning of May, Master Jean de Lastic had summoned all the priors to come to Rhodes in June 1454 for a meeting of the chapter general to resolve the Order s debts. Initially, Lastic ordered each priory to send two representatives with account books showing the priory's income and its debt to the Common Treasury.[1] One week later, Lastic issued a new summons, demanding that the priors attend the upcoming chapter general in person.[2] Neither bull mentioned Mehmet's siege of Constantinople.

News of Mehmet's victory reached Rhodes by 6 July, when Lastic mobilized

the priories for the defence of the island.[3] Lastic's bull explained that the Order's financial condition weakened its ability to defend itself. He urged the European priors to settle their debts and to send four men with sufficient monies, weapons, and other supplies. Even as Lastic's chancery drafted these bulls, the master received news that Mehmet planned to bring his army to Rhodes the following April. Lastic then amended his bull, ordering all members of the Order with military experience to come to Rhodes. Already, armed knights were arriving on the island in advance of Lastic's summons. Fra Karolo and Pedro d'Beupel came from the priory of Aquitaine with arms and their *passagio* (passage money) on 29 May, and three unnamed knights came from the priory of St. Gilles.[4] It is unclear if these men intended to go to Constantinople or were anticipating the threat to Rhodes.

Lastic sent envoys to Mehmet at the same time he appealed to the west for aid to fight the Ottoman leader.[5] On 21 January 1454, Lastic informed the western priories that his envoy, the Turcopolier William Daunay, discovered that the other rulers in the region, including the Christian king of Cyprus, had also sent envoys to Mehmet. Daunay reported that the other Christian powers offered Mehmet tribute, but the Hospitallers refused to pay Mehmet's demand for an annual tribute of 2,000 ducats. Lastic concluded that Mehmet would attack Rhodes next because of its physical proximity to Turkey as well as the defiant stance the Knights had taken against Ottoman expansion.[6] By February, Lastic addressed a letter to all of Christendom, requesting aid to defend against an anticipated attack on Rhodes.[7] Lastic, however, did not inform his European correspondents that he had also sent an ambassador to the Mamluk sultan in Syria, with whom the Order would make a treaty in March, I455.[8]

Lastic's requests for assistance assured his readers that the central convent was doing everything possible to prepare Rhodes for attack, up to and including improvements to the fortifications. Similar assurances, supported by appropriations for building works, appeared in subsequent magisterial bulls. THis contradicts Giacomo Bosio's conclusion, drawn from Caoursin, that when Pierre d'Aubusson became master in 1476, he found the walls and the towers of Rhodes old and in ruins. If this was true, all of d'Aubusson's improvements had to have been carried out within the span of three years.[9] Caoursin's *Descriptio* omitted any discussion of improvements to the Rhodian fortifications between 1453 and 1480. Instead, he described the faulty intelligence Mehmet received about the fortifications of Rhodes from several sources. Anthony Meligalo, a Rhodian who defected to the Turks, passed on out-of-date information claiming that the walls of the island settlement were in a ruinous condition. Demetrius Sophiana, an Ottoman ambassador to Rhodes in 1479, corroborated Meligalo's description of the city's fortifications. Master George, a German

engineer who worked for Mehmet, drew a sketch of the fortifications based on observations he had made twenty years before. Mehmet selected Master George's outdated plan, which omitted such magisterial improvements as the fosse, the tower of St. Nicholas, the tower of St. Peter, and the expansion of the fortified space inside and outside the walls. Bosio's statement does no justice either to previous masters or to d'Aubusson himself. D'Aubusson played an important role in fortifying the city, but previous masters of the Order had not neglected the task.

The building and maintenance of the walls was an on-going project. Archeological analysis of the surviving walls suggests that portions of Rhodes' original Byzantine fortifications remained intact in 1453.[10] The masters had kept the walls in repair since the Order captured Rhodes in 1310, but the Ottoman use of gunpowder artillery against Constantinople inspired a rapid and sustained evolution of the city's fortifications. Medieval military construction could not withstand the bombardment of gunpowder artillery. Long stretches of perpendicular walls were particularly vulnerable because they did not deflect gunshot. The new artillery forced engineers to build larger fortifications that could absorb and deflect the blows, coupled with ancillary structures like "front walls" (*antemurali*), ditches, boulevards, and bastions.

Master Jean de Lastic began improvements upon the defenses of Rhodes even before the fall of Constantinople. In 1453, the tower of Naillac was the prominent feature of the harbor fortifications of Rhodes. The tower, named for Master Philibert de Naillac (1396–1421), bore coats of arms indicating that construction began during the administration of Master Juan de Heredia, with augmentations by subsequent masters.[11] It protected the harbor and controlled the commerce of Rhodes; during the siege of 1480 the chain closing the port stretched between the tower of Naillac and the tower of the Windmills.[12] The tower of Naillac contained a garrison led by a captain, who was paid twenty-four Venetian ducats in 1475.[13] Lastic transformed the landward side of the city's defenses, built new fortifications on top of the small towers to the south-west of the magisterial palace, expanded the gate of St. Anthony, and supervised construction on the gate of St. George as well as the tower of St. Mary.[14]

The Order also built and maintained a system of castles and watchtowers on other islands of the Dodecanese which, like Rhodes, lay in the Aegean Sea within sight of Anatolia. These included the Hospitaller preceptory of Langonis (which consisted of the islands of Kos, Kalymnos, and Leros), plus the islands of Nisyros, Khalki, Symi, and Alimonia. In addition, the Hospitallers maintained the castle of Bodrum on the mainland itself. These outposts defended harbors and kept watch for pirates, but in the aftermath of Constantinople Lastic decided to improve their defences. He warned the

commander of Kos in December, 1453 that his castles were vulnerable to Turkish attack, and ordered him to build two additional towers.[15] It is not clear if these were built by 1454, when a Turkish fleet attacked Kos and raided towns on Rhodes itself.[16]

By then Master Lastic was dead; his successor, Jacques de Milly, opened the meeting of the chapter general on 10 November 1454.[17] Lastic had originally summoned it to resolve the debts of the Order, but now it had even more serious matters to discuss. Pope Nicholas V sent a bull to the chapter general that urged the Hospitallers to fight the Turks and to reform their finances.[18] After the vice-chancellor, Helisseo della Manna, read this and other papal bulls aloud, the scribe recorded the order of business of the chapter general:

1. To reform the spirituality of the Order's hospital and charitable work.
2. To pay the Order's debt.
3. To ensure that the convent could fulfill its ordinary responsibilities.
4. To ensure that the Order could carry out its extraordinary responsibility to fight Mehmet.[19]

It is noteworthy that the spiritual well-being of the Order's hospitaller mission appeared first on the agenda. That item seemed the one thing that the entire Order agreed upon. The other items on the agenda, however, required each of the langues to acknowledge the military authority of the master over the entire convent and to raise large amounts of money. Therefore, the chapter general granted more power to the master to resolve items 2,3, and 4. The Order's debt consisted of the 50,000 florins that the western priories owed to the Common Treasury.[20] The master took over the administration of this general exchequer, which permitted him to handle ordinary and extraordinary expenses, and to act as receiver.[21] The chapter general empowered Milly to collect all of the Order's customary goods and income in the east and west. He could also recover all the debts owed to the treasury, plus all the spoils, *mortuarimn*, and donations.[22] The chapter general authorized a series of visitations to the western priories to collect the debt, until the sum of 50,000 florins was raised for the sustenance of the central convent and the repair of the conventual church of St. John on Rhodes.[23] For a five-year period (until the next chapter general), the chapter general assigned the master the administration of Rhodes, the castle of Bodrum, and the preceptories of Kos, Nisyros, and, when it became vacant, Cyprus, for him to collect their revenues for the treasury.[24]

The chapter general assessed the damage caused by the Turkish raids. It conducted a survey of Kos, Leros, Symi, and Kalymnos, and ordered repairs to the defenses of Kos and Symi.[25] The chapter general asked the master to repopulate Kos, Leros, and Kalymnos, and to place a permanent garrison of

fifty knights in the castle of Bodrum, twenty-five in Kos, and forty in Rhodes. It also ordered the construction of a new fort at Archangelos on the island of Rhodes.[26] In addition, Milly took responsibility for the defense of Kos to help alleviate the Order's debts.[27] When the meeting of the chapter general was over, Milly authorized the repair and maintenance of the defenses of Kos.[28] He announced that the central convent would continue work on the fortifications, and there is evidence that Milly improved the ramparts to the east of the Koskino gate in the city of Rhodes.[29]

As the Order prepared to defend Rhodes, Pope Nicholas V called for a crusade to recover Constantinople. He formed an Italian league and requested the cooperation of Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor, and Alfonso V, King of Aragon, to form a papal fleet. 7he chapter general authorized Milly to contribute 20,000 florins to this fleet, and the Order sent ambassadors to the courts of Europe to raise the money it pledged for Nicholas's crusade.[30] Jean de Lastic had gone to Catalonia before his death in 1454 to collect 30,000 florins for the expenses of the Order, money he raised by pledging its Catalan properties.[31] Alfonso V, who wanted to safeguard Catalan trade in the area, facilitated the transfer of funds.[32] But the death of Nicholas V in 1455 ended plans for a crusade. His successor, Calixtus III, raised a fleet of sixteen ships to fight Mehmet in the eastern Mediterranean.[33] He based the fleet at Rhodes, and planned to keep the island supplied as an outpost against the Ottomans.[34] The Order, however, needed western European aid to finance the papal fleet. In 1456, Pierre d'Aubusson went as ambassador to France to persuade Charles VII to allow 16,000 *ecus* for the papal fleet; while there he collected men and artillery for Rhodes.[35] Calixtus eased the Order's cash flow problems by exempting it from the ecclesiastical tithe imposed after the fall of Constantinople to raise money to fight Mehmet.[36] The Aragonese king again intervened on the Order's behalf by requesting that the pope reallocate to Rhodes the monies collected in England for Nicholas V's crusade.[37] The papal fleet left Naples on 6 August 1456 and arrived in Rhodes by 19 August.[38] Intended as a distraction to divert Mehmet's forces from Hungary to the Mediterranean, the fleet disbanded by the end of 1457, leaving intact the Ottoman threat to the eastern Mediterranean. Mehmet's Aegean fleet soon captured the Genoese colonies in Anatolia before mopping up the remaining Byzantine possessions in the Peloponnese by 1460.[39]

Without the papal fleet, the Hospitallers of Rhodes fell back on their own European resources to improve the defenses of their outlying islands. In December 1457, Milly relinquished the preceptory of Kos to Fra Jean de Castro Novo, the prior of St. Gilles.[40] He gave Castro Novo authority over the preceptory for five years in return for a responsion of 500 Rhodian florins. The preceptory and islands were immune from all other dues because they had

been damaged from the wars with the Turks. In return, Castro Novo would complete all necessary repairs in a space of three years and bear all the expenses of the preceptory. The central convent continued to award extraordinary compensation to key laymen on Kos; for example, the master of the works, or *prothomagistro*, a layman named Bernard Manoti, received property on the occasion of his marriage in 1458.[41]

Despite these actions, western Christendom, like most of the Christian states in the eastern Mediterranean, could not afford to oppose Mehmet indefinitely. By 1459, the Venetians made a trading agreement with Mehmet, and other Christian entities formed their own arrangements with the emerging Muslim power in the eastern Mediterranean. The Hospitallers of Rhodes remained as the only enforcers of papal prohibitions against trade with the Ottomans. This repeatedly brought Milly and the central convent into conflict with their neighbors. The Venetians raided Rhodes itself in spring 1459 because one of the Order's ships had captured two Turks serving on a Venetian galley.[42] Sometime during that year, an Ottoman force of forty sails and 7,000 soldiers landed at Symi, where it spent two weeks besieging the castle and destroying homes across the island.[43] The same force may have attacked the castle of Kefalos on Kos, which also sustained damage in spring 1459.[44]

Milly began repairs on the walls and fortifications of Rhodes in May, 1459, citing a papal bull of Nicholas V, dated 1454, that gave permission for the central convent to use specified revenues for the purpose.[45] He had the houses and churches that encroached upon the city walls demolished and created the *pomerium*, a clear space within the perimeter.[46] He reimbursed the property owners for their loss with the papal funds allocated for the fortifications. The papal grant also allowed Milly to continue the repairs Lastic began on the mole.[47] The chapter general met later in the year to discuss the diplomatic situation and to review the work on the fortifications. Pierre d'Aubusson, in his capacity as castellan of the city of Rhodes, appeared before the master and his court on 27 October 1459 to justify the money he spent on the urban fortifications.[48] After the council discussed this matter, the master gave dAubusson the sum of25,000 florins to reimburse his expenditures.[49] The castle of Bodrum also underwent repairs in 1460.[50] Pope Pius II transferred large amounts of money to Rhodes in 1460 to help pay for these expenses, and Milly levied an additional 100,000 florin tax on each priory.[51]

While preparing for the defense of Rhodes, Milly also became involved in the conflict over the succession to the throne of Cyprus. The king of that island, John of Lusignan, died in 1458 and left the throne to his legitimate daughter, Charlotte. Her illegitimate half-brother, James, with the support and recognition of the Mamluk Sultan Inal al-Ajrud Al-Ashraf Sayf al-Din, invaded Cyprus in September and overthrew Charlotte.[52] She fled to Rhodes,

where Milly supported her claim. It is clear that he believed much more was at stake than a dynastic squabble. In his opinion, James was acting as the agent for the spread of Islam, and his ascent to the throne in Cyprus was thus comparable to Mehmet's capture of Constantinople.[53] The master also worried about the Hospitaller's extensive properties in Cyprus, which supplied a substantial portion of the Order s eastern revenues. Milly helped Charlotte fit out ships in Rhodes during her failed attempt to retake Cyprus in 1461.[54] For the next few years the queen lived on Rhodes, finally relinquishing her claim to Cyprus in the 1480s. In the meantime, however, the sultan of Egypt threatened to besiege Rhodes in retaliation for its support of Charlotte.[55]

The master dispatched ambassadors to repair the Order's deteriorating relationships with its neighbors. In September, 1460, he sent the prior of the conventual church, Fra Michael de Castellacio, as an ambassador to the Signoria of Venice.[56] During that fall, Milly sent Fra John Delphino as an ambassador to the Sultan of Egypt, instructing him to commence negotiations concerning the Cypriote succession. Unfortunately, Delphino angered the Sultan and the Order eventually had to redeem him from captivity.[57] At the same time, Milly took a series of actions to stabilize the situation in the eastern Mediterranean. He eventually re-established friendly relations with the Egyptians, issued a safe conduct for Catalan merchants to trade between Rhodes and Alexandria in June 1461,[58] and issued a safe conduct for a Muslim merchant in Rhodes.[59] Milly's last diplomatic efforts took place in July, 1461, when he appointed d'Aubusson ambassador to the Venetians.[60]

After Jacques de Milly's death in August, 1461, the convent elected a new master, Pedro Raymundo de Zacosta, the Castellan of Amposta. According to the eighteenth-century French historians of the Order, the tenure of the Iberian-born Zacosta was marked by conflict between French and Spanish langues. It began during the mastership of Jacques de Milly when the Spanish knights protested that their French counterparts monopolized the chief offices of Order, especially the office of captain general of the island of Rhodes.[61] These older historical interpretations focus solely upon the internal politics of the Order, and do not consider another reason for Zacosta's unpopularity; his need for money and his controversial practice of obtaining it outside of the Order s traditional methods. His bulls do not reveal his predecessors' preoccupation with the collection of responsions owed to the Common Treasury or the payment of the Order's debts. Instead, he sought other means of financing the construction of the tower of St. Nicholas, and he imposed taxes upon the Rhodians to pay for their own defense – a practice other masters avoided whenever possible. Zacosta also retained for himself the European revenues of the Castellany of Amposta and collected the revenues of vacant preceptories for the Common Treasury, with no accountability to the

council for the expenditure of these funds.

It did not help Zacosta's subsequent reputation within the Order that he was absent from Rhodes for his election, or that he delayed traveling to the island.[62] While he remained in Barcelona between December, 1461 and March, 1462, administering his castellany and seeking safe transport to Rhodes, he appointed Fra Petrus Raffini as his procurator to administer Rhodes.[63] As procurator, Raffini continued Milly's policy of making truces with the Muslim rulers in the East. In October, 1461, he summoned the council of the Order to meet with Mehmet's ambassador and discuss a possible treaty.[64] The council appointed Fra Guillermo Mareschal as the Order's ambassador in January, and he left Rhodes to conclude the treaty in March, 1462.[65] The terms of this instrument may have required the Hospitallers to give "gifts," or tribute, to Mehmet. Cardinal Bessarion reported to the papal curia in August, 1463 that the Order paid Mehmet 3,000 ducats in cash and presents worth a further 5,000 ducats.[66] The treaty with Mehmet meant that Rhodes was in no immediate danger, but gave ammunition to the Order's detractors. Even if the Hospitallers categorized the payments as gifts, freely given, others openly called it tribute.

Zacosta traveled to Rhodes in the spring of 1462, stopping in Rome to visit Pope Pius II. The two men discussed renewing hostilities against the Ottomans, despite the Order's treaty with Mehmet and the unstable fiscal condition of the Common Treasury.[67] Milly's death and the settlement of his estate revealed that the previous master died burdened with debts that he had incurred to meet the expenses of the central convent. Apparently, Milly's control of the Common Treasury and his rights of receivership had done little to reduce the Order's debts; in addition, he had authorized large sums for the modernization of Rhodes' defenses. In October, 1461, Zacosta imposed a new census to collect 50,000 gold florins for settling the debts of the Common Treasury and maintaining the central convent.[68]

Zacosta held a chapter general in Rhodes in November, 1462 to address the issue of debts owed to the Common Treasury. At the opening of the assembly, the master reviewed the military situation in the eastern Mediterranean and described the Turkish attack upon Lesbos.[69] Zacosta reminded the Hospitallers of the fall of Constantinople and Mehmet's subsequent campaigns against other islands in the Aegean Sea. He recounted the Ottoman attack upon Kos in 1454, and the raid upon Archangelos in Rhodes. Zacosta emphasized that the Turkish raids upon Archangelos and Naxos harmed the Order through the loss of revenue and by depriving it of colonists. He also explained the disruption of trade caused by the loss of Cyprian grain. Finally, he defended the debts of the Order, which had been incurred since the sack of Constantinople.

The chapter general estimated the amount of debt at 306,379 lire and established a repayment schedule.[70] It also agreed upon a budget for the needs

of the central convent, holding the priory of France responsible for paying most of the funds.[71] The chapter general decided that the Order's receiver in Avignon would collect the monies, but Zacosta issued magisterial bulls ordering the priories of France, St. Gilles, Auvergne, Aquitaine, Toulouse, and Campania to pay their census into his Castellany of Amposta; he also ordered the priories of Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Dacia, Spain, Italy, and England to pay their census into the priory of Catalonia.[72] By the end of November, the king of France had paid 1,465 *auri* into the Common Treasury.[73] Zacosta also made two major changes at this chapter general. First, he divided the Langue of Spain into two, Castile and Aragon, increasing Spanish participation on the council of the Order.[74] Second, he abolished the marinara, a form of servitude on Rhodes in which the inhabitants either had to serve in the Order's navy or provide a sailor to do so. In its place, he substituted cash contributions to the tax known as the *gabelle*.[75]

Figure 2.1 The remains of the tower of St. Nicholas and the entry of the Mandraki. (Photo: Theresa Vann)

With the exception of this meeting of the chapter general, the registers of the magisterial bulls for 1462–1464 reveal that Zacosta did little to collect debt payments or prepare for warfare. It is possible that the financial records remained with the European receivers, but the absence of both subjects from the magisterial bullarum suggests Zacosta was unsuccessful in adhering to the Order's repayment schedule. He collected port fees, since there is evidence for increased trade between Rhodes and Alexandria, contacts with Syria, and even visits of Turkish merchants.[76] Rhodes acquired grain from Sicily,[77] and exported saltpeter on behalf of Queen Charlotte of Cyprus.[78] Even so, the magisterial bulls referring to repairing and maintaining the fortifications

suggest that Zacosta resorted to extraordinary means to finance the construction of new fortifications. In April, 1463, the master appropriated the revenues of a preceptory of a recently deceased member of the Order to pay for the fortifications of Rhodes, stating the need due to the continuing wars with the Turks.[79] The king of England gave Rhodes 1,325 *solidos* in March, 1464.[80] In the same month, Zacosta imposed the *gabelle* upon the Rhodians and an annate upon the Order's western priories to pay for the construction of the fosse, the great fortified ditch around the city.[81] In 1465, Zacosta received 12,000 ducats from Philip of Burgundy to build the tower of St. Nicholas on the mole in the harbor.[82] The amount of the donation, however, was not large enough to complete the tower. This became an issue at the next meeting of the chapter general in 1466, which forced Zacosta to relinquish a portion of his income to finish the construction of the tower of St. Nicholas.[83] In addition to these major projects, the master repaired and reinforced the walls, erected the tower of the Windmills, and finished the boulevard in front of the Koskino gate.[84] He authorized a German layman to supervise repairs to the castle of Bodrum in 1462, and in September of the next year approved fifty ducats to repair broken stretches of wall.[85] In February, 1463, the master ordered the captain of Bodrum to reside there on account of the ever-constant Ottoman danger, and in June he sent a knight to organize the defense of Kos.[86] Zacosta may have introduced the practice of assigning each langue responsibility for maintaining and defending one specific portion of the walls of the city, as there is no record for this arrangement prior to 1465.[87]

Figure 2.2 Koskinou gate (St. John's Gate), Rhodes. (Photo: Theresa Vann)

Pius II called a crusade against the Turks in June, 1464. He had first proclaimed a crusade in 1459, soon after his election to the papal throne, but the military forces never materialized. Now with the renewed summons, Zacosta began preparing for battle. Using the papal bull to compel the Knights, he ordered the Hospitallers to support the venture and promised to provide ships.[88] The planned crusade came to nothing with the death of Pius in August, 1464. It is difficult to assess if or how the failed crusade affected Hospitaller morale. Perhaps some disappointed knights felt cheated, but judging from d'Aubusson's later experience it is more likely that disobedient members of the Order refused to assist in a crusade unless Rhodes was in danger. It is possible that resentment of Zacosta's financial administration had been percolating in the western priories since the chapter general of 1462. Whatever the causes, the Hospitallers' dissatisfaction with their leader erupted into an open conflict that required papal intervention to resolve.

In April, 1465, Zacosta issued a summons for a meeting of the chapter general in Rhodes the following year. Although it had been less than five years since the meeting of the previous chapter general, the master wanted to discuss the two dangers facing the Order: its great debt and the looming menace of the great Turk.[89] Without citing a specific threat posed by Mehmet to the Order or its islands, Zacosta planned to obtain 5,000 Venetian ducats from the western priories to raise a fleet against the Turks. He wrote of the capture of Cyprus and of islands in the Peloponnese, and predicted some sort of attack upon the castle of Bodrum, the island or Kos, or Rhodes itself. He ordered the priors of St. Gilles, Toulouse, and Auvergne to send a quantity of foodstuffs to Rhodes in place of their yearly responsions.[90] Despite Pius's death the previous April, Zacosta continued preparing for the papal fleet, ordering the prior of Messina to supply provisions, grain, and saltpeter in November.[91] A month later, he wrote to the priory of France, ordering that its leader should send his procurator to serve in the castle of Bodrum and on the island of Kos in lieu of paying its debts to the Common Treasury. In addition, the prior had to send the treasury revenues of certain preceptories for Bodrum and the island of Kos.[92] Vertot informs us that at this point the French knights, supported by the kings of Aragon and Naples, complained to Pope Paul II about Zacosta's demands for responsions.[93] The only evidence in the *Liber bullarum* of any resistance to Zacosta's orders is a bull dated 4 February 1466, in which Zacosta commanded the western priories of the Order to quickly comply with his commands.[94]

Paul II decided that the severity of the complaints and the status of the complainers required his direct intervention. He brought Zacosta to Rome and ordered that the meeting of the chapter general take place there in 1466.[95] The meeting convened at the end of November, 1466.[96] The chief officers of the

Order attended, leaving their assistants in charge of Rhodes.[97] Very quickly, it became obvious to the pope that Order's finances were the main cause of its problems. The chapter general found the Hospitallers 250,000 ducats in debt and concluded that this was because its members were not paying their responsions.[98] Paul II ordered them to pay off the debts in ten years and to reform the finances. He determined that the Order had to raise 54,000 Rhodian florins (which amounted to 27,000 gold *scudi*) for the maintenance of the convent, with 18,000 from the Order's eastern properties and 36,000 from the western priories.[99] The chapter general forced Zacosta to relinquish the Castellany of Amposta (and, with it, the revenues he personally collected) to finance the completion of the tower of St. Nicholas.[100] In addition, the chapter general settled the issues of jurisdiction between Castile-León and Portugal caused by the division of the priories.

The meeting of 1466 in Rome was also important for the constitutional development of the Order. One outcome was the institution's realization that it needed a published *stabilimenta*, or framework, of its rules to reform its administration. Caoursin eventually published this work thirty years later. The chapter general also held the priories responsible for their debts and created a repayment plan. This scheme was refined as the initial papal estimates were adjusted, and as subsequent masters determined new spending priorities.[101] During the next fifteen years, subsequent masters clearly defined the Order's mission as the war against the Turk. They characterized failure to pay debts as an act of military disobedience, subject to punishment. This gave them more power to collect money and to deal with delinquent members.

Zacosta died in Rome soon after the close of the chapter general, and Paul II oversaw the election of the new master, an Italian, Giovanni Battista Orsini. Orsini dedicated most of his energy to paying the Order's debts and collecting the outstanding responsions. Some of the langues paid immediately; the priory of France subsidized their payments with donations from their king. The Castellany of Amposta, which Zacosta surrendered in 1466, needed a longer period to accomplish full repayment. Zacosta's practice of accepting provisions in place of cash made calculating the debts of each priory more complicated, and Orsini issued precise instructions for the payment of the Order's creditors through the receiver in Avignon.[102] In addition to paying the debts of the Common Treasury, Orsini inherited two large-scale building projects in Rhodes. The Order had authorized money for the construction of a new infirmary, but building was delayed because of the continuing indebtedness.[103] Zacosta had begun work on the new fosse, which he financed by taxing the Rhodians. Orsini reviewed Zacosta's plans for the fosse, and by 1468 decided to continue the work using funds earmarked for the new infirmary.[104] He then summoned Pierre d'Aubusson to Rhodes to oversee the construction of the

city's defenses.[105]

D'Aubusson had served as castellan of the city of Rhodes, with responsibility for its defenses, from 1459 until 1462; he had not been in Rhodes during Zacosta's tenure.[106] Orsini brought d'Aubusson back as superintendent of fortifications in 1468 because Orsini considered him best qualified to oversee their construction.[107] D'Aubusson made many additions to the fortifications of Rhodes during Orsini's magisterial tenure, which include the ramparts of the Port (between the Marine Gate and the mole of the windmills); the walls that join the tower of St. John and the tower of St. Mary at the *courtine*; the counterscarp to the north of the Palace; and defensive elements advanced from the tower of St. Paul.[108]

The new work on the fortifications had just begun when Orsini received advance intelligence that Mehmet was assembling a war fleet of thirty triremes and biremes. Assuming this signaled an imminent attack upon Rhodes, Orsini summoned the priors to attend a chapter general in Rhodes in August, 1469.[109] He warned the priors that Rhodes had to pay all its debts before it could face the danger, and ordered them to bring three years estimated annates from their preceptories.

But Rhodes was not Mehmet's target in 1470. Instead, the Ottoman fleet attacked and captured the Venetian island of Negroponte (Euboea).[110] Ihe Venetians had made trading agreements with the Ottomans, which they believed secured the safety of their colonies in the Levant. This had caused conflicts between the Venetians and the Hospitallers, who treated the Venetian ships that carried out this trade as legitimate booty. But the capture of Negroponte shocked and united all the Christian powers in the Mediterranean, who realized that treaties with Mehmet were no guarantee of safety. The Venetians created a defense league that included the Hospitallers, who had sent a fleet to assist at Negroponte.[111] Orsini rapidly mobilized the Order. He issued a magisterial bull to the western priories that described the fall of Negroponte and ordered western Knights to come to Rhodes immediately, bringing with them a three-year advance of priorate income and individual contributions from the members of the Order who remained in Europe.[112] Orsini also reallocated the Order's eastern resources, which included shifting 100 mercenaries and two bombards from Kos to Rhodes.[113]

Despite this energetic response, the Ottomans retained Negroponte and the Order began intensive preparation to defend Rhodes against an assault. Anselme Adorno, a traveler who stopped at Rhodes in 1470–1471, found the Rhodians anxiously anticipating a Turkish attack. According to Adorno, the port defenses consisted of two towers with a chain stretched between them, one of them the tower of St. Nicholas.[114] The records of the *Liber conciliorum* for the years between 1470 and 1480 shows that the Hospitallers updated and

modernized their fortifications on Rhodes and elsewhere in the Aegean sea, collecting wood from Egypt and shipping supplies and munitions from Rhodes harbor to outlying castles, particularly the castle of Bodrum.[115] The master and the convent levied more money from the priories and commanderies to improve the fortifications of Rhodes, and accumulated grain for a possible siege.[116] Orsini dispatched ambassadors to ask for help against Mehmet. He sent Fra Cincio, the prior of Capua, to King Ferdinand of Sicily to seek grain, victuals, stipendiaries, and four or five galleys for the defense of Rhodes, the castle of Bodrum, and the island of Kos.[117] On 12 September 1470 Guillaume Caoursin returned from his mission to the pope, to whom he reported the troubles facing Rhodes since the capture of Negroponte, particularly the maintenance of its ships.[118] The pope gave the Order more time to pay its debts and promised to provide aid.

Orsini intensified the repair and improvement of the Order's fortifications, particularly on its other islands. The tower of the castle of Kos had collapsed and required stones and wood for its repair, and the chapter general of 1471 approved the payment of 1,250 Rhodian ducats from the pension monies to repair the fortifications on Kos, Leros, and Kalymnos.[119] Orsini stationed twenty-five knights on Kos and in December he appointed Fra Edward de Cannedino preceptor of Kos with the authority to oversee the repairs.[120] The master assigned the preceptory of Nisyros, an island between Kos and Rhodes, to Fra Galerando de Luge of the priory of Catalonia.[121] Describing Nisyros as desolate and devastated, Orsini authorized Galerando to spend 1000 florins to restore and fortify one old castle and to build another in a suitable place to protect the people of the island. As for Rhodes itself, in August, 1471 Orsini announced his decision to build walls or ramparts as part of the fosse and to clear space around the walls of the city.[122] He required the merchants of the city to raise 10,000 florins for the fortifications, which would be collected by extending Zacosta's tax another six years.[123]

The meeting of the chapter general in November, 1471, balanced the costs of Orsini's preparations against the Order's indebtedness. Before the meeting opened the chief officers of the Order audited the Common Treasury.[124] This operation was completed by the end of October, when the meeting of the chapter general began.[125] An apostolic letter from Sixtus IV, Pope Paul's successor, summed up the state of the Order's debts for the year 1471.[126] Considering the ongoing danger that the Turks posed to Christians and to the Christian faith, the capture of Negroponte, as well as the subsequent depopulations and other calamities and sacrileges that the Turks inflicted on the eastern islands, Sixtus concluded that the Order needed sufficient funds to fight these threats; thus he gave the master the authority to allocate the funds, particularly the annates, as he saw fit. The pope pronounced the various debts

to the Common Treasury immune from persecution by creditors, leaving the Order unencumbered to fight the enemies of the faith. Orsini then assessed and collected money from each European preceptory for the construction of the fosse around Rhodes.[127] Louis XI of France paid a sum of 300 scudos on behalf of the priory of France, which during the next ten years collected more royal donations to the Order.[128] Finally, the chapter general agreed that machines and bombards, and other munitions should not be removed from the city of Rhodes or transferred unless the master and the council conferred over the matter.[129]

Once the chapter general ended, Orsini continued preparations for the anticipated Ottoman attack on Rhodes. Pierre d'Aubusson chaired an audit of the Common Treasury in April, 1472, which assessed the expenses of the administration of the city, including the infirmary and the granary, in view of a Turkish siege.[130] Pope Sixtus IV raised money for the defense of Rhodes in 1472, issuing a series of bulls that assigned revenues to the Order, permitted the Master to collect income from vacant priories for the defense of Rhodes, and exempted Hospitallers from all imposts.[131] Sixtus justified his actions because it was incumbent upon all to support those who fought the enemies of the cross of Christ, the Ottomans.[132] At the same time, Orsini summoned the western priories to Rhodes in April/May, 1472, warning them again of the likelihood of a Turkish invasion.[133] Orsini expelled from the Order any knights who disobeyed his summons. In, effect, they had disregarded the primary mission of the Order, forsaking Rhodes when it was surrounded by the enemies of the faith.[134] Orsini stepped up work on the fortifications of the city, ordering the eight langues of the convent to pay for the excavation of their section of the fosse and the repair of the length of wall that protected them.[135] He allocated additional money in June and, in September, redirected to the fortifications 1,500 Rhodian florins initially intended for the construction of the new infirmary.[136] More than a year later, in March, 1474, Orsini spent 16,971 florins on the Rhodian fortifications, citing the danger of war with the Turks.[137] In May 1474 he summoned another chapter general to discuss the Order's debts.[138] He also collected 4,537 Rhodian florins from the arrears of the priory of England.[139]

As Orsini prepared for a siege, Mehmet campaigned against the Akkoyunolu Sultan, Uzun Hasan, in Anatolia. The Venetians sided with the Anatolian leader.[140] The Hospitallers may have as well; in February 1474, Orsini issued a safe conduct for the sultan's ambassador and they exchanged captives by March, 1475.[141] But Mehmet put down Uzun Hasan's revolt in 1474, and eliminated the sultan's allies, attacking the Genoese towns in the Crimea and the area of the Black Sea in 1475–1476.[142] Meanwhile, Orsini procured building materials to construct fortifications on Rhodes.[143] Although the sale or

acquisition of wood from Muslim lands was strictly prohibited, Orsini authorized eight Rhodian merchants to purchase wood from Turkey for sale in Rhodes in the spring of 1475.[144] Later that summer, he licensed merchants to purchase wood for Rhodes in either Alexandria or Syria.[145] Merchants who traded in wood through Muslim ports without Orsini's license, however, were still punished.[146]

A commission met on l5 April 1474 to discuss the defense of Rhodes and to collect annates from the priory of England.[147] Two days later, Orsini put 400 silver marks at the disposal of the Common Treasury because of the war with the Turks.[148] In the following month Orsini summoned the chapter general to Rhodes to pay the organization's debts, and in June he commanded the priories to send the sums necessary to defend Rhodes against the Ottomans.[149] Louis XI presented a gift of 1,950 gold *auri* in June.[150] In 1475, Orsini began construction of a tower at the foot of the mole of the windmills to improve the harbor fortifications; the same year he appointed a knight as the castellan of the fortress of Pheraklos.[151]

The Order again planned for an Ottoman attack at the beginning of 1476. They created an evacuation plan for the inhabitants of Rhodes, who would take shelter in the castles of Rhodes, Lindos, and Pheraklos.[152] In June, 1476, the council sent knights to garrison the castles of Bodrum, Kos, and other islands.[153] The Order also built towers on the island of Alimonia, a small strip of land just off Rhodes' west coast.[154] Orsini began diplomatic negotiations with the sultan of Egypt in 1476. In February, he composed a letter to the Sultan's representative,[155] and in the next month sent the Order's ambassador to meet with the Sultan.[156] After six years ofkeeping the Order in a state of alert, Orsini died in June, 1476. The Knights elected Pierre d'Aubusson as his replacement.

# Pierre d'Aubusson and the Siege of Rhodes

Pierre d'Aubusson was the hero of Caoursin's *Descriptio*, a man whose character, spirituality, and moral certitude ensured a successful outcome for the defenders of Rhodes. Caoursin's brief biography of d'Aubusson emphasized the noble origins of his family in Auvergne and the master's personal virtue, foresightedness, and astuteness, painting a picture of a man who succeeded due to his considerable personal talents and the quality of his lineage. For Caoursin, d'Aubusson was the right man at the right time, one who never made a false move and whose intelligence saved the Order from disaster on

more than one occasion during the siege. Caoursin, however, said nothing about d'Aubusson's accomplishments in the service of the Order prior to 1480.

D'Aubusson's education is unknown, although his early biographers claimed he learned about sieges and military strategy from the study of history.[157] The master was 57 years old at the time of the siege and had spent most of his career at Rhodes and in the eastern Mediterranean. He had been preceptor of Cyprus in 1453 when Mehmet conquered the city of Constantinople.[158] By 1459, d'Aubusson, as castellan, was responsible for the maintenance of the fortifications of the city of Rhodes.[159] He was preceptor of Salvis in 1461, and he still held that office when attending the meeting of the chapter general in Rome five years later.[160] Most of his knowledge about fortifications and sieges probably came from experience, not books.

Vertot and other historians of the Order presented d'Aubusson as one of the French opponents to Zacosta's policies at the chapter general in Rome. The records of the chapter general suggest that d'Aubusson was more concerned with the debts to the Common Treasury than the ascendancy of Castilians within the Order. At the meetings of the chapter general, d'Aubusson was a consistent advocate of military preparedness. He emerged as a leader at the meeting of the chapter general in Rome in 1466, where he insisted upon oversight of the Common Treasury.[161] He attended the meeting of the chapter general in 1471 as preceptor of Salvis and procurator for the prior of Auvergne.[162] Advancing to the post of prior for Auvergne in 1475, he returned to France to tend to his priory's business.[163] There he remained until 1476, when Orsini summoned him to Rhodes to reassume responsibility for the fortifications.

When Pierre d'Aubusson became master of the Order upon Orsini's death in the summer of 1476, he faced the same problems that confronted his predecessors: rumors of an imminent Ottoman attack and the reality of no funds to prepare for it. But no previous master matched d'Aubusson's impressive energy and activity, expressed through his numerous bulls with their vigorous language. D'Aubusson also inherited Orsini's intelligence network, and, indeed, may have cultivated it before he became master. Orsini and d'Aubusson issued safe conducts that provide written evidence of an intelligence network of merchants, travelers, spies, and informers that provided information about Mehmet's plans. Under Orsini, the chancery even maintained a separate volume for safe conducts, which were usually registered in the same volume of the *Liber bullarum* with the master's other correspondence. Some people who received such instruments from Orsini were: a Turkish merchant who visited Rhodes in January 1469;[164] a Greek who acted as a Turkish interpreter at the castle of Bodrum;[165] a man called Nicholas the Turk who visited Rhodes for three months in 1470;[166] and, in 1473, a Turk

named Casse Braym, son of Saltuch de Prepia, who conducted business in Rhodes.[167] D'Aubusson issued bulls stating he had first-hand knowledge of a Turkish fleet preparing to attack Rhodes in June, 1477; one month earlier, d'Aubusson had given a Turk a safe conduct to enter Rhodes.[168] Information flowed in the other direction, too; Caoursin describes how the Ottomans obtained intelligence from renegade Christians about Rhodes before the siege. In 1480, when d'Aubusson issued merchants licenses to trade with the Egyptians and Syrians, he cautioned them not to discuss the situation in Rhodes and requested they report back any information they heard.

Acting upon information from his spy network, d'Aubusson anticipated an Ottoman siege of the city in 1476 and 1477. He met with the Venetian ambassador and arrived at an agreement with the Duke of Venice in July-September 1476.[169] He badgered the priories, demanding that they send him currency, and imposed annates on every member of the Order for the repair and renovation of the Rhodian fortifications.[170] He consulted with his councilors in July about increasing the pace of work on the fortifications of the island.[171] In October 1476, he ordered the priory of Toulouse to send fighting men to Rhodes with their *passagio* and he insisted that it pay their debts, so that the central convent could prepare for an enemy invasion.[172] He sent a bull to the preceptories of Paris, Auvergne, Campania, and Aquitaine in December 1476, reminding them that the chapter general had imposed the annates in preparation for a siege. He demanded their payments to the Common Treasury because he planned to maintain Rhodes' walls and fund the construction of new fortifications, towers, and moats to further strengthen the island's defenses.[173] Any who refused to obey the master's demands incurred his wrath. When Fra Jacques Calliot, the preceptor of Brabant in the priory of France, withheld a portion of his annates, d'Aubusson ordered him imprisoned by the priory of Aquitaine, deprived him of the habit, sentenced him to be held in chains, and fed on bread and water in perpetuity as an example to others.[174]

D'Aubusson's bulls express anger and exasperation with knights who, for whatever reason, failed to respond to his commands without a good reason. Part of the problem, as he understood it, was that the western members of the Order would not or could not comprehend the severity of the situation in Rhodes. In July 1477, d'Aubusson summoned the western priories to a meeting of the chapter general to deal with impending Ottoman attacks against the island of Rhodes, the castle of Bodrum, and the island of Kos.[175] He asserted that it was public knowledge in Turkey that a fleet of 200 sailing ships, galleys, and cargo ships was due to leave Constantinople at any time, and that the Order was patrolling the area for news of its departure. He reminded the priories that it had been decided at the previous chapter general in 1475 that the master could issue a military summons to Rhodes at a time of great

emergency. D'Aubusson also summoned individuals to Rhodes, such as Fra Diego de Carvagial, who had experience with arms.[176]

D'Aubusson also planned to import large amounts of grain to provision Rhodes, and in June, 1477, he ordered supply ships to transport victuals and munitions to his endangered city.[177] Between June and October, he issued licenses to several merchants to provide Rhodes with provisions in expectation of a Turkish attack.[178] He also supplied the island of Kos, and modernized the castle of Kattavia on Rhodes.[179] The provisioning of Rhodes continued throughout the summer and into the fall, as d'Aubusson worked ever harder to raise more money to pay for it. Louis XI of France authorized a jubilee for the priory of France to raise money for the Order in 1477.[180] In September, d'Aubusson ordered the priory of France to send money for the repair of the fortifications, and in the next month Charles V donated 700 gold pieces to the Order through the French priory.[181] A Catalan merchant brought d'Aubusson 4,087 French scudos as the annates from two French preceptories (possibly those of Fra Jacques Calliot).[182] Worried that Turkish ships could intercept these cargoes, d'Aubusson licensed captains to capture any Turkish ships found in Rhodian waters in August 1477.[183] The shipments of supplies and monies to Rhodes continued into the winter season, when storms presented a greater danger than pirates. D'Aubusson ordered the castellan of Bodrum to open his harbor to the grain ships headed for Rhodes.[184] In November, he sent Fra John de Cardenna to Lombardy to collect the responsions, annates, and other monies to pay for the sustenance of Rhodes, fit out its ships for war, and purchase much-needed food supplies.[185] In the next month, d'Aubusson ordered any additional money collected to be paid into the Common Treasury in Avignon, in the care of receivers for the priory of France.[186]

D'Aubusson totaled up the amounts of hard currency collected for the siege at the end of January, 1478.[187] The receivers collected varying sums of money in different currencies. Fra Franciscus de Bossols, preceptor of the priory of Catalonia, and the procurators of the Roman curia received no money; the priory of Lombardy received 6,800 Venetian ducats; Fra Johannes Moleti, receiver of the priory of Messane, took in 800 ducats, which was converted into food supplies for Rhodes; another receiver was absent and unable to give an accounting. D'Aubusson informed Fra Franciscus de Bossols that Rhodes needed grain immediately, and ordered him to ship the commodity to the island; in February he authorized a grain purchase from Sicily.[188] The master continued to collect cash from the priory of France, which in March agreed to pay 800 scudos to settle its debts.[189]

The Order's spies had warned of an Ottoman attack in 1477, which occurred, but against Lepanto, not Rhodes. D'Aubusson's intelligence network next reported Ottoman plans for a campaign in 1478. This army moved against the

Crimea and Moldavia, and again Rhodes was spared.[190] The Ottomans could not hide their military preparations, but they could conceal their ultimate destination. D'Aubusson continued preparations to meet an Ottoman attack throughout 1478, although the need to remain in a state of constant vigilance consumed his resources and stretched his credibility with western knights. In May, 1478, he referred to his bull of the previous year and declared all those who disobeyed his summons to Rhodes to be in rebellion.[191] In June, 1478, the harried master issued another license permitting private ships to attack Turkish vessels found within Rhodian territorial waters.[192] In August, Pope Sixtus IV issued a papal bull giving the Order permission to trade for wood with Syria and Egypt for one full year.[193] By early fall, d'Aubusson was once again importing grain from Sicily.[194]

D'Aubusson continued preparing for the chapter general he had called for the autumn of 1478. The meeting of the chapter general, summoned with so much drama, was an anticlimax. Rhodes was not yet under siege, and the priors did not need to attend with armed retinues for its defense. Still, the assembly conducted the necessary business to fulfill the Order's mission and prepared for battle. The chapter general elected procurators to the Common Treasury, agreed that the new infirmary at Rhodes should be completed, and increased the stipend for a similar structure in the castle of Bodrum.[195] It requested the pope to sell indulgences in order to raise money for expenses of the convent not covered by the treasury.[196] Sixtus authorized the sale of indulgences for the defense of Rhodes between 1478 and 1481.[197] Other European rulers facilitated Hospitaller fundraising within their realms. Edward IV of England permitted John Kendall, of the English Priory, to sell indulgences to finance construction projects on Rhodes and the upgrading of Bodrum castle, in 1480.[198] The chapter general sent a delegation to the preceptory of Kos to investigate the guards and knights stationed there.[199] It also agreed to arm a trireme for an entire year and two galleys for four months out of the year.[200] Finally, the chapter general amended Zacosta's original agreement with the burgesses of Rhodes that allocated money from the *gabelle* to the fosse. Now, in a bilingual agreement, the chapter general and the burgesses of Rhodes agreed to use the money to arm a trireme for four months for the defense of Rhodes.[201]

# Preparations for the Siege of 1480

The historians of the Order, Bosio and Vertôt, relate with gusto the elaborate

diplomatic games between d'Aubusson and Mehmet the summer before the siege.[202] Caoursin reports that the Ottoman ruler sent an ambassador, a Greek named Demetrius Sophiana, who offered the Hospitallers peace if they paid a tribute, which they could call a gift if it appeased their pride. The Order, says Caoursin, spurned the offer. Caoursin, however, does not reveal any details of the negotiations that suggest d'Aubusson sought assistance or cooperation in any way from his Muslim neighbors. He omits, for example, that dAubusson renewed a treaty with the Sultan of Egypt to ensure the continuance of an alliance between the Mamluks and the Order. He fails to mention that d'Aubusson negotiated a truce with the Turks to postpone the siege for a year while he dispatched ambassadors to European courts. Caoursin never admitted in print that d'Aubusson had other sources of intelligence other than his own native astuteness.[203]

In April, 1479, the master discussed with his council the points Demetrius Sophiana raised as Mehmet's ambassador.[204] Within a month, the council began intensive preparations for an Ottoman siege of Rhodes, while arming a ship to send aid to Bodrum castle.[205] In late summer, the council implemented Sixtus IV's bull that permitted them to trade for wood with Egypt.[206] Following negotiations with Mehmet's son, Djem, d'Aubusson agreed to a truce with the Turks. During this respite, he began summoning individuals to come to the defense of Rhodes.[207] On 20 July he a license for Fra Don Alvaro de Scuniga, Prior of Castile, to travel to Rhodes with ten knights from his priory.[208] Four days later, d'Aubusson commanded the priories to mobilize and to arrive at Rhodes in less than a year.[209] In the meantime, he sent ambassadors to the kings of France and Naples to request their aid for an impending siege on 28 July.[210] In September he warned the German priories of a possible attack by a Turkish fleet.[211] Within two months, the master had firm news to send to all the western priories. Based on information obtained from secret letters, he wrote that a Turkish fleet of 160 vessels equipped with bombards and war machines, and transporting a large force of trained soldiers, was preparing for an immediate attack upon Rhodes or its vicinity.[212] He wanted the western priories to send experienced soldiers and supplies and insisted they had to arrive by the following spring.[213] Not all of the priories obeyed this order quickly or directly, apparently disregarding the example of Fra Jacques Calliot in 1477.[214] On 1 March 1480, the master ordered the priories of Auvergne and St. Gilles to send armed men to Rhodes as soon as possible.[215] By May, the priory of Toulouse still had not sent a contingent.[216]

Figure 2.3 The tower of Italy, Rhodes. Originally one of the city gates, this tower and the wall beyond (enclosing the Jewish Quarter) were badly damaged during the 1480 siege. The present mass of the tower was rebuilt in the early 16th century. (Photo: Theresa Vann)

The long-anticipated siege began on 23 May 1480 and lasted until the final Turkish assault on 27 July. According to Caoursin's official account, the Turkish guns bombarded the city, destroying the tower of St. Nicholas and terrifying the inhabitants. The Hospitallers held the tower, denying the Turks control over the port. The Turks shifted their attention to the weakest part of the city's walls, those surrounding the Jewish quarter defended by the langue of Italy. The Hospitallers and their allies held the wall and prevented the Turks from entering the city. D'Aubusson was wounded in the thick of the fighting. The Turks retreated from the siege and, boarding their ships, withdrew from the island. Soon after, relief ships arrived from Naples. Other witnesses provided additional details, but Caoursin's account of the siege supplied the framework for all subsequent narratives.

No bulls were registered for the duration of the siege, supporting Caoursin's statement that the work of the chancery was suspended during the fighting. The registration resumed in August, 1480.[217] The post-siege bulls document the death and destruction wrought by the campaign. Throughout the fall, D'Aubusson filled commanderies made vacant by death or default.[218] The chancery began issuing licenses to leave Rhodes in September.[219] The master and the chancery then assessed the spoils of the knights killed during the siege.[220] The chapter rewarded heroes of the action by accepting them into the Order or awarding them pensions.[221] The relief fleet from Naples had to be dealt with, but their arrival with fresh soldiers permitted the convent to release survivors of the siege from guard duty.[222] The chapter sent ambassadors to the

pope and to the king of Naples, reporting the victory and requesting aid in case of a renewed Turkish attack.[223]

The conclusion of the siege did not mark the end of the danger to the convent on Rhodes. The Hospitallers had repulsed the Ottomans but had not defeated them, and their forces still presented a danger. The chapter decided to arm ships to sail against the Turks to prevent an attack on Kos in August, and d'Aubusson warned the island's bailiff in September of a possible Ottoman invasion.[224] The Order fitted out more ships and captured some Turkish vessels in Rhodian waters.[225] It was not until October that the council believed that Mehmet's fleet had left the vicinity, and that it was safe to dismiss the relief ships and the Neapolitan soldiers.[226]

Figure 2.4 The tower of St. George, Rhodes. Built by master Fluvian (ca. 1421–1437) originally as part of a gate. Angled walls shielded the gate opening by 1465; after 1480, Masters d'Aubusson and Philippe Villiers de l'Isle Adam closed off the gate with thicker, bastion-like walls (Gabriel, *Cité*, 1:35–36). The tower demonstrates how the master and the convent continually updated the walls to meet the demands of improved gunpowder artillery. (Photo: Theresa Vann)

The siege revealed to d'Aubusson the weaknesses in the fortifications of Rhodes, and he planned major changes and modifications to the walls, including eliminating gates and replacing them with bastion-like fortifications. The master formed an estimate of the costs to rebuild the walls and repair the fosse in November, 1480.[227] He needed to raise money immediately, because he expected the Ottoman forces to return and resume the attack on Rhodes. In September, d'Aubusson summoned the European priories to Rhodes in

expectation of the return of Mehmet's army, and he ordered the Castellany of Amposta to provide bombards for the defense of Rhodes.[228] In the meantime, something had to be done with the walls the Turks had leveled during the siege. The council contributed wheat to sell for the repair of the walls in August, and in the next month decided to demolish the church of St. Anthony because it had provided a convenient base for the Turkish attempts against the tower of St. Nicholas.[229] Later, in February, the council decreed the demolition of more churches to clear structures away from the walls.[230]

This atmosphere inspired the creation of Caoursin's *Descriptio* and d'Aubusson's official letters. The Hospitallers on Rhodes had repulsed an Ottoman siege, and western Christendom celebrated it as a triumph. The preparation, however, had been expensive, and d'Aubusson needed to collect more money to pay for repairs. Part of the difficulties in preparing for the siege had been the Order s inability to collect the western priory's debts to the Common Treasury. D'Aubusson planned to tax the knights and other members of the Order who did not come to the siege, but he needed to convince them of the reality of the Turkish threat and the righteousness of the Order's cause.[231] D'Aubusson informed the priories that he was sending five ambassadors with written letters to describe the history of the siege, a story that would excite minds and inspire its listeners to send aid to Rhodes.[232] He planned to circulate a stirring account of the victory to secure the support of the Order's own priories and to smooth the progress of fundraising in western Europe.

Although the master demanded more armed ships and triremes to come to Rhodes' defense in 1481, Mehmet's army did not return to besiege the city.[233] That year the Great Turk died and an earthquake struck the city of Rhodes. D'Aubusson and the Hospitallers became involved in the succession crisis between Mehmet's two sons, Djem and Bayezid. The Order offered Djem refuge and held him in the west; in return, Bayezid paid the Order for his brother's upkeep. Caoursin published the history of all these events in the *Rhodiorum historia* in 1496. The Ottoman forces did not return until 1522, when Suleiman the Magnificent captured Rhodes and sent the Hospitallers into exile.

1 AOM 364, f. 4r-4v, 12 May 1453; Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vin. Pal. 3520, ff. 30a-31b, contains copies of similar magisterial bulls.

2 AOM 364, ff. 2v-4r, 6 May 1453. The text to the priory of France is preserved; the chancery listed the other priors who received the same letter on the same day underneath it in the *Liber bullarum.*

3 AOM, 364, ff. 5v, 37v, 116r-v. R. Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo la cadutadi Constantinopoli nelle relazioni dei Gran Maestri di Rodi," *Bullettino dell'istituto storico italiano per il medio evo e Archivo muratoriano* 51 (1936): 159—161, no. 1 (bull to the priory of France).

4 AOM 364, ff. 12r, 30r.

5 AOM 364, f. 117v (old enumeration, f. cxvib) 30 September 1453.

6 AOM 364, f. 94; 21 January 1453/54; also Valentini, "L'Egeo," pp. 162–163, no. 2 (partial transcription).

7 Valentini, "L'Egeo," pp. 163–164, no. 3.

8 AOM 365, f. 176r-v, 16 March 1455.

9 Bosio, *Dell'Istorid*, 2:373; considered by Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:109.

10 Anna-Maria Kasdagli and Katerina Manoussou-Della, "The defenses of Rhodes and the Tower of St. John," *Fort* 24 (1996): 15–36. The improvement of the landward defenses began under Anton Fluvian (1421–1437). Lastic enhanced the walls from the tower of St. John to the Jewish Quarter, and Milly continued his work. Also see Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes;* lean Christian Poutiers, *Rhodes etses chevaliers (1306–1523)* (Brussels, 1989).

11 Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:69.

12 AOM 365, ff. 252–253r, the Ordinances of the Port of Rhodes (1454) refers to it as the tower of the Port.

13 AOM 382, ff. 204v-205r, 3 February 1475.

14 Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:108–109.

15 AOM 364, f. 174r.

16 Bosio, *DeU'Istoria* 2:246; Norman Housley, *Ihe Later Crusades, 1274–1580* (Oxford, 1992), p. 225; Abbé de René d'Aubert Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers Hospitallers* (Paris, 1726), 2:240–241; Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia, 1976), 2:145. The Turkish fleet besieged the castle for three weeks in an unsuccessful attempt to collect tribute. See Zacharias N. Tsirpanlis, "The Turkish Siege of Kos in June, 1457," in *Hē Rodos kai hoi Noties Sporades sta chronia tōn Iōannitōn hippotōn, 14os-l 60s ai.* (*Rhodes and the south-east Aegean islands under the Knights of St. Ţohn*) (Rhodes, 1991), pp. 103–124, for evidence of a later siege.

17 Bosio, *Dell'lstoria*, 2:92.

18 AOM 282, f. 5r, *Licet area statum et bonum.*

19 AOM 282, f. 8r.

20 AOM 282, f. xix a.

21 AOM 282, f. xv b.

22 AOM 282, f. xix b.

23 AOM 282, f. xix a.

24 AOM 282, f. xxa-b.

25 AOM 365, ff. 169v-171r, 19 November 1454.

26 VertÔt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 2:242–243. The Ottomans raided the fortress in 1457; the Order rebuilt it between 1457 and 1466. See Spiteri, *Fortresses of the Knights*, pp. 136–137.

27 AOM 282, f. 20r.

28 AOM 365, ff. 169v-171r, 19 November 1454.

29 AOM 364, f. 9r, 21 January 1454. Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:109.

30 AOM 282, ff. xix b-xx a.

31 Constantin Marinescu, "L'ÎsIe de Rhodes au xve siècle et l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jerusalem d'après des documents inédits," *Studi e Testi* 125: *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, 5 (1946): 397.

32 Alan Ryder, *Alfonso the Magnanimous: King of Aragon, Naples, and Sicily, 1396–1458* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 295–296.

33 Housley, *Later Crusades*, p 103.

34 AOM 1126, ff. 385–386v; Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:184–189; also Theresa M. Vann, "The Fifteenth-Century Maritime Operations of the Knights of Rhodes," in *The Military Orders.* Volume 4: *On Land and by Sea*, ed. Judi Upton-Ward (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 215–220.

35 Marinescu, "L'Îsle de Rhodes," p. 400.

36 Calixtus III, *Graveslabores*, 19June 1455,in: AOM 1128,f. 100; AOM 1141, f. 380. Also see Léopold Devillers, *Inventaire analytique des commanderies beiges de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem ou de Malte* (Mons, 1876), p. 14, no. 59. Calixtus III had exempted the Order from paying the ecclesiastical tithe to fight the Turks after the fall of Constantinople (25 September 1455).

37 Marinescu, "L'Îsle de Rhodes," p. 399.

38 Housley, *Later Crusades*,p. 104; AOM 367, ff. 166v-168r, 19 August 1456.

39 Housley, *Later Crusades*, p. 104; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300–1650* (New York, 2002), p. 30.

40 AOM 367, ff. clxb-clxvi a (165v-166r), 1 December 1457.

41 AOM 367, f.208r-v, 12 April 1458.

42 Bosio, *Dell'lstoria* 2:269. Milly issued a safe conduct for two Turkish merchants to travel between Rhodes and Turkey in May, 1460 (AOM 370, f. ccxxxviii a); he sent an ambassador to the Signoria of Venice in September (Bosio, pp. 269–70).

43 AOM 370, ff. ccxvii b-ccxviiii a, 21 November 1460. In consideration of the damages, Milly reduced their annual census to 750 florins. He appointed a new administrator to the island, AOM 370, f. ccxix b, 16 February 1460/61. Also see Zacharias N. Tsirpanlis, "The Inhabitants of Symi are Commended for their Resistance to the Turks," *Hē Rodos kai hoi Noties Sporades sta chroma tōn Iōannitōn hippotōn, 14os-l 60s ai.* (*Rhodes and the southeast Aegean islands under the Knights of St. John)* (Rhodes, 1991), pp. 125–135.

44 AOM 369, f. ccxiii a (f. 245r), 24 April 1459.

45 AOM 369, f.ccxv r (12/15) [247], 8 May 1459.

46 AOM 369, ff. ccxiiii a-b (f. 246r-v) 4 May 1459; f. ccxiiii a-b (14) [246r-v].

47 AOM 369, f. ccxv r (12/15) [247], 8 May 1459.

48 AOM 282, f. liib.

49 AOM 282, f. lxvii b.

50 AOM 370, f. ccxi, repairs to the castle of Bodrum, 18 April 1460.

51 Sebastiano Paoli, *Codice diplomatico del Sacro Militare Ordine Gerosolimitano oggi di*

*Malta, Raccolto da varj documenti di quell'archivio*, 2 vols. (Lucca, 1737), 1:138,139, nos. 117, 118; Housley, *Later Crusades*, p. 226.

52 Harry Luke, "The Kingdom of Cyprus, 1369–1489," in *A History of the Crusades*. Volume III: *The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. by Harry W. Hazard (Madison, 1975), p. 383.

53 See AOM 370, f. ib.

54 Luke, "Kingdom of Cyprus," p. 384.

55 Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 1: 346–347.

56 AOM 370, f. clii a, 29 September 1460; also Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:269–270.

57 AOM 369, f. 276; AOM 370, ff. cliii b-cliiii a, 9 December 1460; f. cliiii b, 19 January 1461.

58 AOM 371, ff. 224v-225r, 17 June 1461.

59 AOM 371, f. 224r-v (ccxxvii a-b), 17 June 1461.

60 AOM 371, f. 160v-161v (clxi b-clxii b), 31 July 1461.

61 Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 3:14–15; Dominique *Bouhours, History of the Turkish War* (London, 1683) 47–48.

62 AOM 371, f. 227v (ccxxx b) 27 August 1461.

63 AOM 373, ff. 42v-46v, 116,122. Raffini's appointment was dated 10 October 1461. In April Zacosta chartered a ship in Majorca to take him to Rhodes.

64 Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:280; AOM, 282, f. 144.

65 AOM 371, ff. 65v, 214v (ccxvi b) 10 March 1461/2; AOM 282, f. 144.

66 Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:245 fn. 48.

67 Valentini, "L'Egeo," p. 147, cites Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:219; also Pius II, *Commentarii rerum memorabilium* (Frankfurt, 1614), p. 204.

68 AOM 371, f. 164r-v (clxv a-b) 12 October 1461.

69 Valentini, "L'Egeo," pp. 164–168, doc. 4, 4 November 1462.

70 AOM 282, f. 117r, marginal note. Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:285, gives the figure as 306,069 lire. For an analysis of Hospitaller income during the fifteenth century, see Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, pp. 525–82; idem, "'The Rights of the Treasury': the Financial Administration of the Hospitallers on Fifteenth-Century Rhodes," in *The Military Orders*, vol. 2: *Welfare and Warfare*, edited by Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998); and Theresa Vann, "The Exchange of Information and Money between the Hospitallers of Rhodes and their European Priories in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *International Mobility in the Military Orders*, edited by Jochen Burgtorf and Helen Nicholson (Cardiff, 2006), pp. 34–47.

71 AOM 282, f. 118b. The king of France donated the money to the Common Treasury.

72 AOM 372, ff. 2v-3v, 3v-4r, 4v, 5r, 4 November 1462.

73 AOM 372, f. 188r, 24 November 1462. *Auri* was the gold coinage of France. The Common Treasury of the Order acted as money changers, receiving currencies and converting them into Rhodian florins.

74 AOM 282, f. 112b.

75 AOM 372, f. 118v-119r, 4 November 1462.

76 AOM 371, f. 184v, 4 September 1462, Cholie Attam, a Jew of Rhodes, was sent on commission to Syria; AOM 374, f. 190r, 23 March 1463, Constantine Sclero was appointed as the agent for the Order's business in Alexandria and Syria; f. 221r-v (ccxxxii a-b), 9 August 1463, Sabay Mauro of the city of Alexandria received a safe conduct; f. 227r (ccxxxviiia), 4 January 1463/4, Zacosta gave the freedom of the city to Chamuxa Duoddodgli, a Turk; f. 230r (ccxli a), 24 March 1464, Zacosta accepted Johanni, son of Nece of the Christian Sirio Alexandrino, in Rhodes as his vassal.

77 AOM 374, f. 226r (ccxxxvii a), 27 January 1464, Jacobus Boti received a safe conduct to sail to Sicily to obtain grain and victuals for Rhodes.

78 AOM 374, f. 225r (ccxxxvi a), 5 November 1463, Arcis Serviam of Rhodes received a safe conduct to carry a quintaria of saltpeter.

79 AOM 372, f, 190r-v, 1 April 1463.

80 AOM 374, f, 98r, 1 March 1463/4.

81 AOM 374 f. 159v-161r, 6 March 1464/5, f. 206r-v, 1 March 1464/5.

82 AOM 375 ff. 161r(clxa), 161v-162r (clx b-clxi a), 22 June 1465, 20 June 1465; also see Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 2:257–258; Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:144–145, doc. II.

83 AOM 376, f. 206r (cciii a), 22 December 1466.

84 The construction date of the tower of the Windmills is uncertain, although Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:61, dates it to between 1461 and 1475, with a strong preference for 1465.

85 AOM 372, f. 214r (ccxv a), 18 August 1462; AOM 374, f. 194r, 1 September 1463.

86 AOM 374, ff. 189r-v, 194v-r, 10 February 1462/63, 13 June 1463.

87 AOM 73, f. 144r-v; Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:143–144.

88 AOM 374, f. 4r-5v, 23 February 1463/4; Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:288–289, with date of 1464, in an Italian translation. Also see AOM 73, f. 132, for the Order's decision to supply ammunition to Bodrum at this time.

89 AOM 375, f. lr-3r, 6 April 1465.

90 AOM 375, f. 108r-v, 24 July 1465.

91 AOM 375, ff. 109v-11 Or, 18 November 1465.

92 AOM 375, ff. 5v-6r, 23 December 1465.

93 Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 1:353.

94 AOM 375, f. 110v, 4 February 1465/6.

95 AOM 1130, f. 9.

96 AOM 283, f.5 [2].

97 AOM 283, f. xb, 7 December 1466.

98 Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:281; Gaspare da Verona and Michele Canensi, *Le vite di Paolo II*, ed. by Giuseppe Zippel, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores: Raccolta degli Storici Italiani, vol.* 3, part 16 (1904): pp. 185–188.

99 AOM 283, f. xxxiiia-xxxvi; AOM 315, p. 211.

100 AOM 376, f. 206r (cciii a), 22 December 1466.

101 See AOM 283, f. xxxiiia-xxxvi, and Sarnowsky, *Macht*, pp. 564, 574–576. The original papal assessments in 1466 did not add up to 54,000 florins. The western priories were supposed to provide 36,000 Rhodian florins, but their assessments added up to 35,980 florens; the eastern properties were supposed to provide 18,000 Rhodian florins, but their assessments added up to 12,100 florens.

102 AOM 377, ff. 8r-9r, 22 November 1468.

103 AOM 377, f. I67r-v, Procura inflrmarie nove (blank bull), 28 March 1468.

104 AOM 377, f. 243r [ii<c>xxxxvr], 16 February 1468.

105 AOM 377, ff. 60r-v, undated bull (but follows bull dated 26 November 1468, and second to last entry in the register).

106 Sarnowsky, *Macbt und Herrscbaji*, p. 663; AOM 371, f. 54r, 1461.

107 AOM 73, f. 30; AOM 377, ff. 60r-v, undated bull.

108 Gabriel, *La cité de Rhodes*, 1:109.

109 AOM 378, ff. 2r-5v, 17 August 1469.

110 See Giacomo Rizzardo, *La presa di Negroponte fatta dai Turchi ai Veneziani*, ed. Emmanuelle A. Cicogna (Venice, 1844) for a contemporary account of the siege, with documentation.

111 Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 1:355. Setton, *Papacy and Levant* 2:231–363, attributes Mehmet's attack upon Negroponte to the Venetian–Hungarian alliance against him.

l12 AOM 379, ff. lv-3v, letter on the capture of Negroponte. 25 August 1470. F. Molard, "Lettre du grand maitre de I'ordre de Rhodes," in *Bulletin historique etphilologique du Comite des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (Paris, 1891): 65–68, published the text of the bull found the Archives de I'Yonne II.

113 AOM 74, f.47v, 27 October 1470.

114 *Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)*, ed. and trans, by Jacques Heers and Georgette de Groer (Paris, 1978), pp. 361–363.

115 Anthony Luttrell, "The Building of the Castle of the Hospitallers at Bodrum," *The Hospitaller State on Rhodes and its western Provinces, 1306–1462* (London, 1999), VI, p. 156, suggests that this was a period of continuous repairs and additions to towers and walls.

116 AOM 74, ff. 19v, 26r, and 33v.

117 AOM 379, f. 227r [November, 1470]; also AOM 74, f. 48r-v; Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:324.

118 AOM 379, ff. 224r, 225r, 12 September 1470.

119 AOM 380, ff. 196v- 197v, 27 November 1471; f. 212v, letter to Michael tu Philippu, permitting the restoration and repair of a ruined tower on Kos, 23 November 1471.

120 AOM 380, ff. 197v-198v, 23 December 1471.

121 AOM 379, ff. 235r-236r, 20 May 1471.

122 AOM 379, ff. 236r-237v, 17 August 1471; AOM 380, £ 40v; AOM 379, f. 179r, repair of the walls of Rhodes, 27 August 1471.

123 AOM 379, ff. 179r, 236r-237v, 27 August 1471; 17 August 1471.

124 AOM 283, f. xlvii.

125 AOM 283, f. xlvii b.

126 AOM 283, f. lxxxib-lxxxii, *Et si magnis*.

127 See AOM 74, f. 96, for the fosse from the tower of Spain to the gate of St. Anthony, 29 November 1471.

128 See AOM 380, f. 3r, 26 November 1471, for the king of France and the priory of Aquitaine; also ff. 3v, 40v-41r, 57v-58r, 71v, and 90r-v.

129 AOM 283, f. lxxix b.

130 AOM 381, ff. 147r-148v, 4 April 1472.

131 AOM 1126, f. 410, *Ad dilectum filiorum*, 25 June 1472.

132 AOM 1126, f. 412, *Graves labores*, 25 June 1472.

133 AOM 381, ff. lr, 35r-v, 102v-103v, 116v, 12 May 1472, 16 April 1472, 4 January 1472/3, 24January 1472/3.

134 AOM 381, ff. 5r-v, 71v-72r, 19 August 1473, 6 May 1472.

135 AOM 381, f. 115r-v, 28 July 1472.

136 AOM 381, ff. 195v-198v, 202r, 12June 1472, 17 September 1472.

137 AOM 381, f.207r, 7 March 1473/4.

138 AOM 382, ff. lv-2r, 26 May 1474.

139 AOM 382, ff. 147r-148r, 197r-198r, 15 April 1474, 16January 1474/5.

140 Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, pp. 32, 34.

141 AOM 381, ff. 233r, 221r-222v, 9 February 1473/4, 4 March 1475.

142 Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, pp. 34–36.

143 AOM 75, f. 49, 16 June 1474, also Spiteri, *Fortresses of the Knights*, p. 135.

144 AOM 382, f. 198v, 6 April 1475. See Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 34, for the timber trade between Anatolia and Cairo, and the fourteenth-century papal prohibition against any Hospitaller timber trade with the Turks.

145 AOM 382, f.236r, 7July 1475.

146 AOM 75, f. 93, 11 October 1475. In November, Francisco Torrillas came to Rhodes with aprohibited cargo ofwood (AOM 75, f. 95v; AOM 382, f. 224v.).

147 AOM 382, ff. 147r-148r, 15 April 1474.

148 AOM 75, £80.

149 AOM 382, ff. lv-2r, 4r-v, 26 May 1474, 16 June 1474; AOM 75, f. 85, the Order provisioned the Castle of St. Peter in 20 July 1475.

150 AOM 382, f. 5r-v.

151 AOM 382, f. 20lv, 3 November 1475; AOM 75, f. 75, 1 April 1475; AOM 382, f. 203r, 12 December 1475.

152 AOM 75, ff. 62r-63r, 104v, 3 March 1475, 7 March 1476. Published Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, pp. 642–643, no. 25; also Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:357.

153 AOM 75, f. 105,16 March 1476; also Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:357.

154 AOM 75, f. 118v, 1 June 1476; also *Bosio*, *Dell'Istoria* 2:359–360, Gabriel, *La Citéde Rhodes*, 1:147, Spiteri, *Fortresses of the Knights*, pp. 158–160.

155 AOM 382, ff. 223v-224r, 6 February 1475/6.

156 AOM 382, ff. 221r-222v, 13 March 1475/6.

157 Bouhours, *History of the Turkish Wiir*, pp. 7–8.

158 AOM 364, f. 173r (clxix a): Magisterial bull to Pierre d'Aubusson, preceptor of Cyprus, regarding a two-year dispute with the king of Cyprus (20 October 1453); AOM 282, f. lv.

159 AOM 282, f. liib, f. lxvii b; also see AOM 371, f. 54r (Pierre d'Aubusson, castellan, received a license to leave Rhodes and return to his priory, 24 July 1461); f. 54r-v (d'Aubusson received the casale of Catagro on the island of Rhodes as a reward for his services, 24 July 1461). Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, p. 663, dates d'Aubusson's term as castellan to April - October 1459.

160 AOM 371, f. 160v (clxi b)-161v (clxii b), 31 July 1461; AOM 283, f. x b.

161 AOM 283, f. x b.

162 AOM 283, f. xlvi a.

163 Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, p. 678.

164 AOM 384, f. lOv, January 1469.

165 AOM 384, ff. 29v-30r, 30 January 1470.

166 AOM 384, ff. 43v-44r, 7 November 1470.

167 AOM 384, f, 86v, 23 December 1473.

168 AOM 385, f. 221r, 28 May 1477.

169 AOM 75, ff. 136v-37v; also see Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:364–365.

170 AOM 383, ff. 56v-57r (Ivi b-lvii a), 27 June 1476.

171 Gabriel, *La Cité de Rhodes*, 1:147–148, 2:228–229; AOM 75, ff. 118v [126v], 137, 2 JuIy 1476, 18 December 1476.

172 AOM 383, f. 44v-45r (xliiii b-xlv a), 45v-46r (xlv b-xlvi a), 11 October 1476, 7 October 1476.

173 AOM 383, f. 7v-8r, 24 December 1476, payments into the Common Treasury for the defense of Rhodes.

174 AOM 385, ff. 9v, 12r-v, 28 October 1477, 28 June 1477. Eventually, however, he was released to enjoy his commanderies in Brabant, Liége, and Hainaut, and eventually served as procurator for the prior of France in 1491. See Em. Gachet, "Essai sur le bailliage d'Avalterre et sur les commanderies de l'ordre de St.-Jean de Jérusalem en Belgique," *Compte-Rendu des Séances de la Commission Royale d'Histoire, ou Recueil de ses Bulletins* 15 (1848): 41–42.

175 AOM 385, f. lr (I a), 1 July 1477.

176 AOM 385, f. 11lr, 12 November 1477.

177 AOM 383, ff. 263r-v, 29 January 1476/7; AOM 385, ff. 137v-138v (cxxxvii b-cxxxviii b). 28 June 1477.

178 AOM 385, ff, 222–223, 221r-v, 10 June 1477.

179 AOM 75, f. I62v-163r, 16 August 1477, 19 August 1477. For Kattavia, also see *Bosio, Dell'Istoria* 2:370–371; Spiteri, *Fortresses of the Knights*, p. 150.

180 See AOM 385, ff. 139v-l40r.

181 AOM 385, ff. 139v-140r (cxxxviiii b-cxl a), 163v, 4 September 1477, 18 October 1477.

182 AOM 385, ff. 1 Ov-1 lr, 22 November 1477.

183 AOM 385, ff, 227v-228r, 9 August 1477.

184 AOM 385, f.225v, 16 October 1477.

185 AOM 385, ff. 141v-142v, 8 November 1477.

186 AOM 385, f. 143r (cxliii a), 16 December 1477.

187 AOM 385, f. 144r-v (cxliiii a-b), 28 January 1477/78.

188 AOM 385, ff 144v-145r (xcliiii b-cxlv a), 145r-l46r (cxlv a-cxlvi a); 27 January 1477/78, 3 February 1477/78.

189 AOM 386, f. 6r [via], 4 March 1478.

190 Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, p. 36.

191 AOM 386, f. 8r-v[viii a-b], *Declarans rebellium* [1 May 1478?].

192 AOM 386, f. 222r-v (ccxxiii a-b), 10 June 1478.

193 AOM 386, ff. 189r-190v (cxc a-cxci b), 194v-195r (cxcv b-cxcvi a), 18 August 1478, 18 September 1479, 19June [1478], 13 February 1478/79; 15 February 1478/79, 19 February 1478/79, 1 March 1478/79.

194 AOM 386, ff. 223v-224r (ccxxiiii b-ccxxv a), 11 October 1478.

195 AOM 283, f. clvb, ff. cxvib-clxviia, clxviib-clxviiia.

196 AOM 283, f. clxxa-b; Devillers, *Inventaire analytique des commanderies belges*, p, 15 no. 65, 12 December 1479.

197 Melk, Codex Mellicensis 424 (443. H 63), ff. 204a-207b, two bulls of indulgence for plenary remission of sins in return for providing aid to the Order of the Hospital against the Turks, dated Rome 1479, 1480. Also see Codex Gottwicensis 510 (455), ff. la-5a, for a letter the chapter of Passau wrote to Sixtus IV in 1480 protesting the concept of indulgence as an expansion of the papal majesty and questioning whether the Roman church had such powers. The proximity of the complaint to a papal letter about the Turks (ff. 5b-6b) in the register suggests that the indulgences for Rhodes angered the chapter.

198 Paoli, *Codice diplomatico*, cxxiii, p. 146.

199 AOM 283, f. clxviiiia.

200 AOM 283, f. clxviiii a.

201 AOM 386, ff. 191r-192r (cxcii a-cxciii a) 12 November 1478.

202 Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:386–397; Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 1:363–367.

203 Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers*, 1:366; Bosio, *Dell'Istoria* 2:392, 396.

204 AOM 76, f. 26r-v, 14 April 1479.

205 AOM 76, ff. 29v-30r.

206 AOM 76, f. 37, 27 August 1479, *Nuper nobis exponi feastis*.

207 Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:347. After Mehmet's death, Djem sought refuge in Rhodes from his brother Bayezid.

208 AOM 387, f. 82v (lxxxii b), 20 July 1479.

209 AOM 387, f. 6b-8b (f. 8b dated 24July 1479).

210 AOM 387, ff. 47v-48r, 28 July 1479.

211 AOM 387, f. 108r, 13 September (1479).

212 AOM 387, f. lr, P. Francie, 21 November 1479.

213 AOM 387, f. 35r (xxxva), 5 November 1479.

214 AOM 387, f. 58r (Iviii a), 15 April 1479/80.

215 AOM 387, f. 35v (xxxvb), 1 March 1479/80. 216 AOM 387, f. 40r-v. 31 May 1480.

217 AOM 387, f. 53v, 18 August 1480. *Setton, Papacy and Levant*, 2:347, n. 4, mistakenly gives the impression that nothing was registered in this volume until October. He refers to the section of the volume administering the eastern properties of the Order and Rhodes itself.

218 AOM 387, ff. 53v (liii b), 62v (Ixii b) [bottom], 54v-55r (liiii b-Iv a), 55v (Iv b), 18 August 1480, 17 August 1480,13 October 1480.

219 AOM 387, f. 61v, 8 February 1479/80,7 September 1480.

220 AOM 387, f. 56v (lvi b).

221 AOM 76, ff. 50v, 56v, 57r.

222 AOM 76, f. 50v.

223 AOM 76, f. 50v.

224 AOM 76, f. 50v; AOM 387, ff. 18v-19r, 20 September 1480.

225 AOM 76, f. 50v, 51r, 56v.

226 AOM 76, f. 55v.

227 AOM 387, ff. 64r-65r, 16 November 1480.

228 AOM 387, ff. 19r-v. 23r-24r, 64v, 23 September 1480,16 November 1480.

229 AOM 76, ff. 51v, 52r.

230 AOM 76, f. 62r. The stones would be recycled to rebuild the walls.

231 AOM 387, f. 64r, 73v-74r, 16 November 1480.

232 AOM 387, ff. 19r-v, 23r-24r, 23 September 1480.

233 AOM 387, f. 140v.

# Chapter 3
# The Genesis of the *Descriptio*

A single entry in the volume of the *Liber conciliorum* for the years 1478–1488 describes the circumstances surrounding the creation of Caoursin's *Descriptio*:

> Quia civitas Rhodi obsidebatur per Turcos et summo conatu oppugnabatur, in tanta rerum perturbacione ac formidine, peracta in scriptis non sunt redacta, sed habita victoria, historia est edita per GUILLELMUM CAOURSIN Rhodiorum Vicecancellarius, quae per orbem impressorum arte est divulgata, quapropter in hoc spacio nil est registratum. Ita est G. CAOURSIN Rhodiorum Vicecancellarius.
>
> (Because the city of Rhodes was being besieged by the Turks, attacked with great force, and harassed by the agitation and dread of such great matters, nothing was written in the registers, but having achieved victory, Guillaume Caoursin, Vice-chancellor of Rhodes, has written a history, and this has been distributed throughout the world through the art of printing. Therefore nothing is entered in this space. It is so. G. Caoursin, Vice-chancellor of Rhodes.)[1]

The *Liber conciliorum*, written in a compact secretarial hand, records the minutes of the master's council. The script and the layout of this entry set it apart from the rest of the text on the leaf. It catches the eye because it is written in a large humanist script consuming two-thirds of the area intended for text. An inverted arrow drawn in the margin draws additional attention to the paragraph. There is no doubt that the appearance of the notice was deliberate. Caoursin habitually wrote the records of the chancery in a typical fifteenth-century secretarial hand. But he used a humanist hand for two types of official acts: original magisterial bulls on parchment (not the copies he registered in the bullaria); and references in the register to himself and to the activities of the chancery.[2] Caoursin's decision to write this entry in a humanist hand suggests that the production and the dissemination of the *Descriptio* was an extraordinary work commemorating an extraordinary event. Placed within the context of chancery business, however, keeping and publishing records of

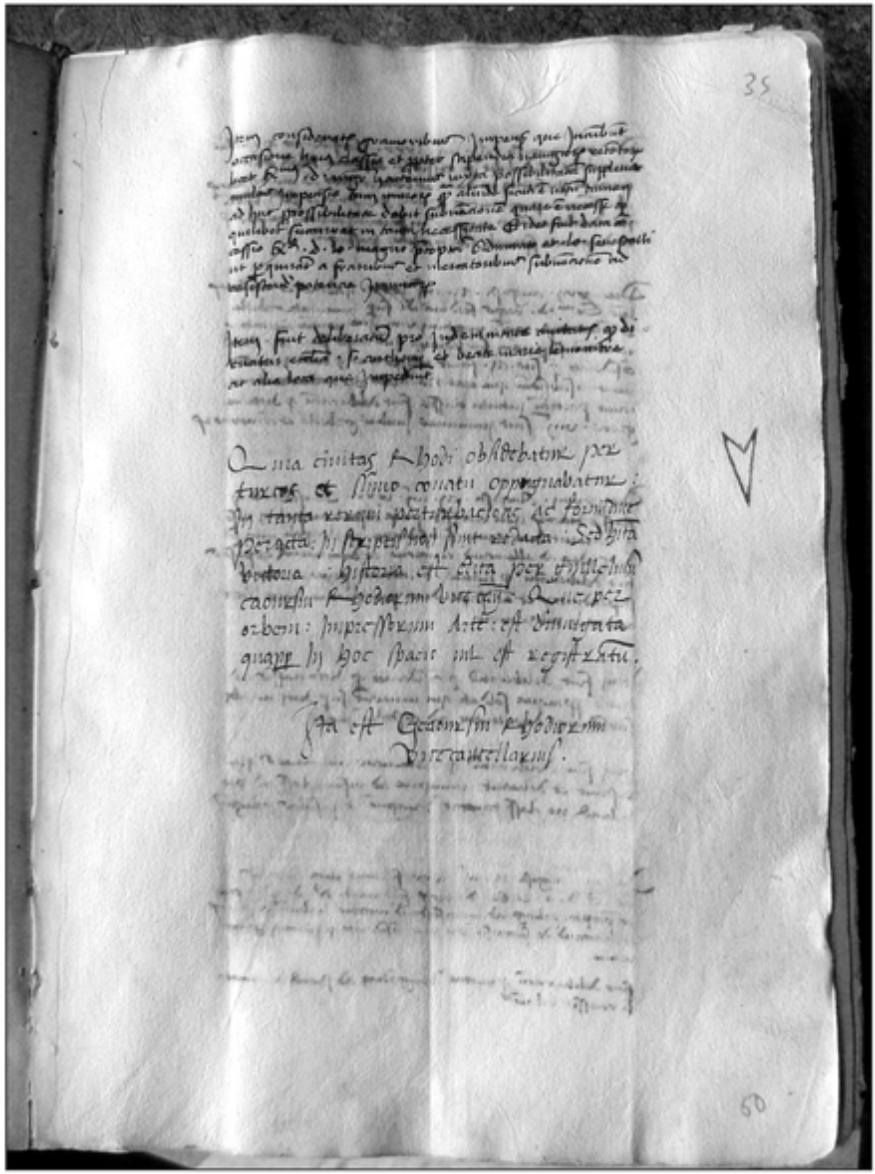


Figure 3.1 Malta, Valletta, National Library, AOM 76, f. 35r (50r), entry recording Caoursin's official account of the siege. (Photo by permission of the National Library of Malta)

events was a normal part of Caoursin's duties. In addition to registering the magisterial bulls and taking the minutes of the meetings of the council general, the Hospitaller chancery publicly disseminated the statutes formulated during the council general, chronicled the history of the Order, and produced written descriptions of the Order's battles with the Muslims. The last was not a unique Hospitaller practice. The communication to Christendom of the progress of the

fight against the Muslims was a diplomatic narrative genre, which took the form of letters, reports, or prologues to charters.[3] D'Aubusson's letters to Pope Sixtus IV and Emperor Frederick describing the outcome of the siege fall within this genre.[4] The council's decision to publish Caoursin's *Descriptio*, an historical work, as the official account of the siege represented an innovation in the Order's chancery practices.

The council's decision to publish the *Descriptio* is notable because it specifically mentions printing, then a relatively new technology. Compared with other religious orders, the Hospitallers were not noted for their book learning. Critics of the Order, such as Marsilius of Padua, even claimed that the Hospitallers accepted illiterates who would have been rejected by any other religious order.[5] Enough vernacular correspondence survives in the magisterial bullaria to support Marsilius' accusation that some knights were unschooled in Latin.[6] Although individual knights attained prominence in the world of letters (the most famous was the fourteenth-century humanist, Master Juan Fernandez de Heredía), the Order's mission did not require its members to preach or teach, and clerics with scholarly inclinations probably found other religious orders more congenial.[7] The lack of an institutionalized literary tradition, however, may have made the Order more open to new intellectual trends and technological innovations than other, more bookish, religious orders.[8]

The council's choice to print the *Descriptio* provides insight into the reading habits of the Knights of the Hospital. Mehmet II's capture of Constantinople in 1453 and his subsequent campaigns against Latin Christians coincided with the development of the printing industry in Europe. Printers supplied readers with news of Turkish battles and sensational accounts of Turkish atrocities. At the same time, humanists created a new literary genre that described the fifteenth-century expansion of the Ottoman Empire as the major threat to Europe and Christendom.[9] They wrote numerous orations and epistles on the subject, some advocating a crusade, others the creation of a unified Christian commonwealth to withstand the barbarian foe. The earliest examples by Johannes Bessarion, a Greek cardinal in the Latin rite, and Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, bewailed the loss of the ancient civilization that had inspired humanist learning.[10] They called upon western Europe as the new defenders of western civilization, and named the Turks as the new barbarian Goths at the gates of Rome. Bessarion renewed this theme to rouse western Europe following the fall of Negroponte in 1470; Pius II revisited it in his open letter to Mehmet II in 1469.[11]

Upon its publication in 1480, Caoursin's *Descriptio* joined other works in this genre. It sold to sensationalists who wanted news of the latest Turkish defeat, while at the same time it engaged humanists with its familiar rhetorical

flourishes. The *Descriptio*, however, was neither a potboiler nor a literary exercise; it was a history written in the service of the Hospitaller state.[12] D'Aubusson intended Caoursin to write an authoritative account of the siege that presented the Hospitallers of Rhodes as the defenders of Christendom against the Turks. Its audiences included the members of his own Order, who had to be convinced to support the rebuilding of Rhodes; the influential humanist advisors in European courtly circles, who would react positively to an appeal couched in recognized form; and, not least, the indulgence preachers of Europe, who used it as a source for narrative and exempla.[13] The ultimate purpose of the *Descriptio* was to raise money for the defense of Rhodes.

Caoursin's experience and education qualified him for the task. His professional life in the Hospitaller chancery spanned most of the period between the fall of Constantinople and the siege of Rhodes. For over twenty years prior to his personal experience of the siege in 1480, Caoursin had documented Turkish assaults on the Order's eastern preceptories, registered magisterial bulls warning of impending invasion, and recorded the never-ending work on the fortifications of Rhodes. Caoursin's job as vice-chancellor dealt in the minutia of the organization of registers and of record keeping and retrieval. As an educated man, he would have been aware of the power of rhetoric to persuade and command others; decades of professional experience compiling magisterial bulls pleading for support from the west would have convinced him of its importance.

## Caoursin's Career in the Chancery

Caoursin was born in Douai, Flanders, in 1430.[14] His name suggests a French or Flemish origin, confirmed by the colophon to the *Rhodiorum historia* which describes his birth as "galli beige."[15] Anthony Luttrell postulates that Guillaume was the illegitimate son of Fra Guillaume Caoursin and could not join the Order because of his birth.[16] Other Caoursins were associated with the Order, and one, Adrian Caoursin, was a contemporary of the vice-chancellor.[17] Guillaume Caoursin received an extensive education before he arrived in Rhodes. The registers identify him as a graduate of the University of Paris, a Doctor of Liberal Arts, and a Professor of Law.[18] Caoursin's name first appeared as vice-chancellor in the *Liber bullarum* of 1456, issuing licenses for members of the Order to travel from Rhodes.[19] At this stage in his career, he also recorded the magisterial bulls written in Italian.[20] These registers from the early years of Caoursin's career contain two different secretarial hands:

Caoursin's distinctive small, tidy writing style produced with a fine nibbed pen; the other, larger, more careless, written with a thicker nib. This other hand possibly belonged to Fra Melchior Bandini, who had been appointed chancellor in 1437.[21]

Although the office of the chancery was formally established in 1314, the Order's statutes first defined the chancellors duties in 1382.[22] The ideal chancellor was a literate member of the Order who was both eloquent and prudent; if he was a layman, he had to be discreet and faithful as well.[23] The chancellor kept records of the conventual decisions regarding benefices and justice, registered and preserved the master's bulls, and collected records of the treasury's expenditures. The statutes of the chapter general held in Rome in 1446 assigned the role of historian to the chancellor, requiring him to record the deeds of the master in order to perpetuate his fame.[24] Since at least the early thirteenth century the Hospitallers had included the official lives, or chronologies, of deceased masters in manuscripts of the Order's rule and statutes.[25] Although this clause did not reappear in subsequent statutes, it shows that the Hospitaller chancellor, like his humanistic counterparts on the Italian peninsula, preserved the institutional memory.[26]

The early statutes also provided for a vice-chancellor, either a member of the order or a layman, who performed the work of the chancellor in his absence. Over a hundred years later, Caoursin's printed edition of the *Stabilimenta* detailed the vice-chancellor's specific duties, such as issuing safe conducts, attending the masters public audiences (probably to take minutes); tallying the votes determined by a show of hands during the meetings of the council; and recording the minutes of the councils of the Order.[27] Caoursin's other duties in the chancery consisted of recording the minutes of the chapter general, and the production and registration of the master's bulls. Finally, it was the vice-chancellor's responsibility to publish the *stabilimenta* of the Order.[28] The *stabilimenta* were the additions and clarifications the chapter general made to the rule of the Order. The use of the word "publish" in this instance meant that the vice-chancellor had to make the *stabilimenta* public; it was not yet associated with printing, editing, or authorship. To publish the *stabilimenta*, Caoursin had to record them in the official minutes and read them aloud in the meeting. His printed edition of the *Stabilimenta*, which collected and collated all the statutes of the Order in one volume, was first published around 1493.[29]

The definition of the vice-chancellor's official responsibilities evolved over time. An agreement in 1450 between the chancellor, Fra Melchior Bandini, and the vice-chancellor, Helisseo della Manna, outlined Helisseo's tasks during Bandini s absence.[30] In addition to his work as the master's secretary and curial scribe, Helisseo's duties as vice-chancellor consisted of recording the meetings of the central convent and maintaining the records in the chancery.

During the meeting of the chapter general in 1454, Helisseo's work was that of an interpreter for the unlearned members of the Order unfamiliar with Latin culture.[31] He read aloud the official documents and translated them from Latin into the "vulgar" language. Helisseo described these actions as "publishing" the bulls.[32] Later, the same chapter general decided that the vice-chancellor should publish its *stabilimenta*.[33] Milly ordered Helisseo to publish the Latin *stabilimenta*, the vernacular *rotuli* (or memorials), and make them intelligible to all.[34]

The word "*rotuli*" suggests that the chancery kept records in the physical form of rolls; however, no documents in this format survive in the main archives of the Order. Helisseo used the word "*rotuli*" at other times to describe the Order's official records, not their physical appearance. At the meeting of the chapter general in 1459, the bailiffs and priors presented the *rotuli* of the previous chapter, which the master ordered the chancellor to read in public.[35] Immediately after the reading, the chapter members heard a dispute, which they resolved by consulting the *rotuli* and recording the outcome in it.[36] However, they would have consulted the volume now known as AOM 282, which is a codex written on paper, not a parchment roll. Nor are any parchment rolls included in an inventory taken in 1447 of the registers and books in the chancellor's room. At that time the room held 103 books, plus two new registers and one formulary of the written customs. An additional thirty "old" books belonged to the office, but were stored elsewhere.[37] The inventory does not describe their contents or supply titles, but the chancellor's room possibly contained the *Liber bullarum*, which today consists of forty-five volumes dating between 1346 and 1447, and the four volumes of the registers of the Chapters General that predate 1447. The remaining volumes may have been accounts of visitations (AOM 45), books of receipts (AOM 48), records of magisterial foundations (AOM 53) and (AOM 56), priory records (AOM 47), and collections of petitions, bulls, and letters formed into volumes.[38] Some magisterial records may not have been kept in the chancery. When news reached Rhodes in 1467 of the death of Zacosta in Rome, the lieutenants on Rhodes secured Zacosta's spoils, which included transferring the magisterial bulls and the *Liber bullarum* to the treasury; later one volume of the *Liber conciliorum* was also removed from Zacosta's spoils and transferred to the treasury.[39]

It must be noted that the records that survive in the archives from the Rhodian period were the records kept by the master's household. Other sets of records kept by different offices within the Order have not survived. The treasury had its own archives (now lost) maintained by a scribe who received and recorded the responsions paid into the Common Treasury on Rhodes.[40] Priors brought records to meetings of the chapter general; some of these

survive piecemeal in the archives of the Order while others have disappeared. For example, upon the death of the preceptor of Cyprus in 1462, his administrative records were transferred to the chancery on Rhodes; these documents, however, no longer seem to be in the Rhodian collection, and may have returned to Cyprus with the new preceptor.[41]

At the meeting of the chapter general in 1459, the chancellor performed the duties later assigned to the vice-chancellor. Milly ordered this official to read and record the memorials and writings produced during the chapter general so that the knowledge of the noteworthy deeds of the Order could be widely disseminated.[42] The chancellor recorded the *stabilimenta* and registered the magisterial bulls.[43] The chapter general consulted the magisterial bulls to confirm previous commands and to determine the resolutions of earlier disputes, some of which became part of the *stabilimenta*.[44]

Caoursin attended his first chapter general in 1462, where he served as scribe in addition to holding the title of vice-chancellor.[45] This chapter general was significant because it removed the office of the chancellor from the master's household, elevated it to the same dignity as the other great officers of the Order, and awarded it to the prior of the new langue of Castile.[46] The *stabilimenta* establishing the office of chancellor within the purview of the langue of Castile also stipulated a need for a suitable vice-chancellor to act as the chancellor's deputy in Rhodes.[47] The vice-chancellor would keep the bulls and maintain the chancery, just as the chancellor had, and act as the chancellor's procurator at meetings of the council.[48] Despite these tremendous institutional changes, the chancery personnel initially remained unchanged. Zacosta reserved the office of vice-chancellor for Fra Melchior Bandini, who had been serving as chancellor within the Master's household.[49] Caoursin served as Bandini's *locum* (or lieutenant) with the title of vice-chancellor while Bandini was the Order's procurator in Rome in 1465.[50] During this period, Bandini paid Caoursin 400 Rhodian florins to perform his duties. Caoursin again served as Bandini's lieutenant, with the title of vice-chancellor, during the meeting of the chapter general in Rome in January, 1467, which Bandini also attended.[51] This assembly appointed a committee of nine fraters who would work with Caoursin to reform the *stabilimenta* and improve the administration of the Order.[52] When the meeting ended, Bandini remained as the Order's procurator to the papal court in Rome, and Caoursin resumed his duties of vice-chancellor as Bandini's locum on Rhodes. In 1469, Master Giovanni Battista Orsini wrote to Bandini, authorizing a stipend of thirty gold pieces for Caoursin for the performance of his duties.[53] Caoursin served as Bandini's *locum* and did not hold the office of vice-chancellor in his own right until 1470, the year that Mehmet captured Negroponte. In July of that year, Orsini appointed Caoursin vice-chancellor and sent him to Rome as the

Order's ambassador.[54] Caoursin's appointment and his mission to Rome suggest that Bandini, who died the following year, was already in declining health. At a papal audience arranged by Cardinal Orsini, Caoursin told Pope Paul II of the situation in Rhodes after the Ottomans had captured Negroponte. Caoursin returned to Rhodes in September, and wrote a report in Italian about his embassy.[55]

The new chancellor, the Castilian Fra Gonzalez del Rio, attended the meeting of the chapter general in November, 1471.[56] At the start of the assembly, Orsini appointed Caoursin as the Order's permanent vice-chancellor.[57] In fact, he performed the duties of chancellor during the chapter general, reading aloud the papal bulls and recording all the official texts the meeting had generated.[58] He registered the *stabilimenta* at the conclusion of the chapter general, and was charged with the duty of publishing them by reading them aloud and making them known to the public.[59] Among the *stabilimenta* he read aloud, one referred to him specifically; the vice-chancellor could only register the votes, the communications, and the registered copies. He could not record things without permission or contradict what was said.[60] Although the chapter general did not define it as one of his duties, Caoursin as vice-chancellor permitted members of the Order to view chancery records pertinent to their business.[61] With permission from the master he sometimes served as the witness to settlements between members of the Order in the chancery, suggesting some sort of primitive chancery court on Rhodes.[62]

The volume of work in the chancery increased after Pierre d'Aubusson became master in June, 1476 and began intensive preparations for an Ottoman siege. The chancery drafted his magisterial bulls, wrote them out as attested charters, and registered them in the *Liber bullarum*. Before the siege in 1480, d'Aubusson sent a series of bulls to the members of the Order reporting on the military situation of Rhodes. Normally, the chancery organized the bulls in the register by the priory that received them. Bulls issued to every priory in the Order were recorded only in the first section of the *Liber bullarum*, under the priory of France. In these cases, the chancery listed under the text the name of each recipient of the bull.[63] Bulls summoning the Order to the defense of Rhodes concluded with the invocation of obedience and the threat of expulsion from the order if the appeals were ignored. The production of numerous accurate copies within a specified period of time required a well-organized and staffed chancery. Caoursin continued as secretary to the master in addition to his duties as vice-chancellor. He was assisted by the scribe, Fra Johannes de Argentina, the master's chaplain.[64] At the meeting of d'Aubusson's first chapter general in 1478, Caoursin's duties of registering and publishing the *stabilimenta* was described as customary.[65] In 1479, Sixtus IV resurrected a reform of Paul II, requiring the Order to publish its *stabilimenta* so that all the

members could have access to them; the bull did not, however, specify the form this publication would take.[66] In 1480, the chancellor was absent from Rhodes, so Caoursin performed those duties in addition to his own, which meant he sat on the council of the Order and advised the master.[67]

Internal evidence in the *Liber bullarum* supports the declaration that the chancery suspended its regular work during the siege in 1480.[68] The first documents it produced after the siege were a series of magisterial bulls, warning that even with the successful defense of Rhodes the Order was still in danger and its master expected the Turks to return. D'Aubusson addressed a magisterial bull dated 23 September to all the members of the priory of France, advising that the Order was still in danger, and they must send aid to Rhodes promptly. He referred his readers to writings and reports for details of the recent siege.[69] Could he have been referring to his official letter or Caoursin's *Descriptio?* Caoursin may have already written the *Descriptio* by November, when the council of the Order noted there existed numerous and confusing accounts of the siege, and gave Caoursin 1,000 Rhodian florins.[70] The stated purpose of the money was for Caoursin to buy a house and marry, but the document's references to different accounts of the siege implies that the *Descriptio* was published around this time.

Caoursin continued his duties as vice-chancellor after the publication of the *Descriptio*, but he received personal recognition as an author and a scholar. He served again as the Order's ambassador to the Papal curia in 1485, when he delivered an oration before Pope Innocent VIII.[71] The papal oration was an honor conferred upon noted scholars, and Innocent rewarded Caoursin by appointing him Apostolic Secretary and Count Palatine.[72] Caoursin's oration delivered before Innocent VIII was printed and distributed. His major scholarly work was the compilation of the Order's statutes, entitled *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum militum* (1495). His final published work was an illustrated collection of histories of the Order, the *Rhodiorum historia* (1496), printed by Johann Reger of Ulm.[73] The *Obsidionis* is the first text in the volume; subsequent texts are Caoursin's histories of events that occurred after the siege of 1480, such as the death of Mehmet II, the earthquake at Rhodes, and the life of Prince Djem, the brother of Bayezid, who came to Rhodes. Caoursin was absent from Rhodes at the time Reger printed the *Rhodiorum historia*; he may have been editing it in Ulm, as the book's colophon states.[74] Caoursin died in 1501.[75] His survivors included at least one daughter, Domina Annesa, who was a dependent of the Order in 1513.[76]

## The Composition of the *Descriptio*

The language of the *Descriptio* links it closely to the work of the chancery. Caoursin re-used themes and phrases that had appeared in magisterial bulls summoning western Hospitallers to meetings of the chapter general in Rhodes between 1453 and 1480. The narrative prologues of these documents told of warfare between the Order and the Ottomans. The magisterial bulls defined the nature of Christian warfare against the Turk in language western Christian readers would understand. The chancery not only knew the details of battles that took place in the Levant, but, by 1480, had developed standard phrases to describe and interpret events. Frequently-used formulae invoked western chivalric ideals (the celibate Knights became the protector of women and children) with the sense of European ethnic identity (the knights are not fighting to regain Jerusalem but to prevent the extermination of Christianity both as a faith and as a people).[77] Frequently-used phrases presented the Knights as warriors for the faith, full of love for Christ; they defended the weak, and they protected and respected the Eastern Christians who, since the fall of Constantinople, came under their care. The Ottomans were characterized as the polluters of Christianity and the destroyers of the Christian people. The Hospitaller chancery listed Ottoman atrocities: the killing of men, pregnant women, and babies; raping virgins; and abducting young boys. The chancery re-iterated to its European audience that the celibate Knights defended the Church, all Christians (including, since the fall of Constantinople, Eastern Christians) and protected the weak in their care to preserve the purity of the Christian race.[78] A modern reader would call this propaganda; Caoursin would have called it rhetoric in the service of his master. It was not an accurate portrayal of the relationship between the Order and the Ottoman Empire. The chancery focused on the atrocities of war and omitted any instances when the Order was the aggressor or a petitioner to the Ottomans.

The narratives in the magisterial bulls also provided Caoursin with an interpretation for the historical process of causation – or, in other words, why the siege happened when it did and not before. Finding a sympathetic interpretation for the Knights' actions played an important role in shaping the narrative. A factual history of the Order's activities prior to the siege could provide ammunition for the Hospitaller's critics, who challenged them for not confronting the might of the Ottoman Empire head on; even those western Christians who appreciated the military disparity between Christian and Muslim forces might disapprove of some of the Order's diplomatic efforts to delay a confrontation. Soon after word reached the Order's central convent of the loss of Constantinople in 1453, magisterial bulls cited Mehmet's conquest of the city as suitable cause to believe that he would attack Rhodes next. As the Ottomans acquired more Aegean islands from the Greeks and Latins,

magisterial bulls described the conquests, and listed the Christian islands conquered or subjugated through the payment of tribute. Pierre d'Aubusson's magisterial bulls, issued immediately before and after the siege of Rhodes, found the historical origins of the Order's resistance to the Ottoman siege in the earlier conquest of Constantinople. When it came time for Caoursin to write the official account of the siege of Rhodes in 1480, the Order's chancery had already fully developed the historical causation of the siege, tracing it from the conquest of Constantinople twenty-seven years earlier. Caoursin placed the siege of Rhodes in 1480 within the context of Mehmet's capture of Constantinople in 1453, establishing twenty-seven years of personal enmity between the Knights of Rhodes and the Ottoman Sultan.[79] He acknowledged Mehmet's other conquests in the eastern Mediterranean, but omitted mention of any diplomatic exchanges between the Order, Mehmet, or any other Muslim power in the Levant.

Before Caoursin entered the chancery, Lastic's bulls to the western priories about the fall of Constantinople employed historical references and rhetorical flourishes: the lamentation for the loss of Constantinople, the captivity of its Christian population, and the nameless cruelties that Mehmet inflicted upon them. News of the fall of Constantinople was slow to reach the west. Venice knew on 29 June; Rome on 8 July.[80] Rhodes received word of the fall of Constantinople shortly before the Roman curia; on 6 July, Master Jean de Lastic wrote to the priories with the news: [81]

> With great bitterness of our heart, we inform your community that the Great Turk, the greatest enemy of the Christians, has devoted his energy to taking possession of the city of Constantinople, has besieged it with 600,000 soldiers and, finally, on twenty-ninth day of the month of May just passed, has captured the city through force of arms with a great massacre of the Christians. In this campaign, he carried out every kind of cruelty, impiety, and abomination to such an extent that it is impossible to speak of or think of acts of such great cruelty. Indeed, he ordered the Greek emperor, who had fought bravely in the war, to be sought out and found among the corpses and if he was alive to be decapitated. After killing sons before the eyes of their parents, he slaughtered the city's nobles and princes. He then gave over the entire city to plunder. The Christian fleet that had come to relieve the emperor was captured. This was so except for a few Genoese ships and Venetian triremes which escaped because of their speed. The ships were almost devoid of sailors since the remainder of their crews had perished in battle. The Great Turk captured the Genoese city of Pera without use of arms. He only leveled its walls and imposed a tax on its inhabitants; it was believed he would do the same with Constantinople. He restored his fleet once more to attack all the islands of the East so he might attempt to make them into tributaries or destroy them.[82]

Lastic expected Mehmet to attack Rhodes very soon, so he commanded all able-bodied knights in the west to come to Rhodes. Those that disobeyed would be expelled from the Order. Lastic believed that the Order's debts

hampered its military response to the Ottomans, so most of the letter outlined the procedures for the priories to follow when collecting all the money due to the Common Treasury and sending it to Rhodes.

A bull Lastic sent to the priory of Auvergne in January, 1454 reported the situation that the Order's envoy to Mehmet's court witnessed in Constantinople. Not only did Mehmet continue his atrocities against the Christians, but he also collected tribute from neighboring cities. He had demanded two thousand ducats a year from the Hospitallers of Rhodes, which Lastic refused to pay. Because of this, wrote Lastic "we and all of our islands are in such danger, we do not know how to act. Indeed, the Great Turk has our island of Rhodes in his heart and is constantly moving his jaws to swallow it up."[83] The Orders avowed refusal to pay tribute isolated them, and placed Rhodes in immediate danger. Lastic requested immediate aid, and assured his readers that Rhodes was building a very strong wall and making other military preparations. Nowhere did Lastic mention any terms or offers that the Order's envoy may have made to Mehmet. Instead, he contrasted the depravity of the Great Turk with the steadfast virtue of the Knights, and insisted there was no compromise between them. Lastic again appealed to the reader's emotions in his letter of introduction for Bernardo de Monte Olivo in February of 1454. Bernardo, a witness to the fall of Constantinople, was seeking support to recapture the city. Lastic describes how Bernardo's hearers should react to his accounts:

> The tragedy of events that were unfortunately suffered should be repeatedly sung of by poets in every generation! Information about this should be given to all secular rulers, hearing of the slaughter of the entire city and of how little good faith was shown in the succeeding events, and how the great gifts deceived the men who surrendered to him with blandishments of fortune. Like sheep, streams of Christian captives bound with chains and ropes were brought through Europe and Asia, sold into slavery, and treated so shamefully that nothing more miserable can be said. All the Christian lords must be moved to piety and mercy and must all come together to avenge the blood that has been spilt and to liberate Greece and Asia from the power of the infidels. But unless this is done, this fire will spread far and wide and will devour other provinces and the name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, will be brought under the reproach of all.[84]

Lastic repeated his earlier image of the Great Turk devouring Rhodes, claiming that "he has [the desire for] this land of Rhodes in his heart and is changing from thinking about this in his mind to devouring it in his jaws. He is determined to have his deeds surpass those of Alexander the Great."[85]

Lastic's bulls stirred the reader to pity Mehmet's victims and to imagine the Hospitallers of Rhodes sharing their fate. It took another eight years for a magisterial bull to put Mehmet's career into an historical context and to use past events to persuade those who read or heard it that Rhodes was in danger.

At the meeting of the chapter general at Rhodes in 1462, Master Pedro Raymundo de Zacosta recounted Mehmet's conquests in the Levant in light of the military and economic threat they posed to the Order. Zacosta hoped to impress upon the western priories that the Order still had to prepare even though the Ottomans had not yet attacked Rhodes. It is a long document that could not have been written without consulting the records of the chancery. By this time Caoursin served as a scribe and vice-chancellor, and the bull contains some stylistic crutches similar to those in the *Descriptio,* particularly the use of "*enim*" ("indeed") to link sentences. It is unlikely, though, that Caoursin was the sole author. The rhetoric of Zacosta's bull continues Lastic's pleas for the pity and the sympathy of the reader or listener, but introduces the motif of tears, which, if as effective as claimed, would have made the meeting of the chapter general very damp indeed:

> In thinking to ourselves of the afflictions, calamities, and dangers to an order of this kind, it seems fitting for us to be perpetually weeping rather than expose our troops already ground down by destruction to pointless care. But when we look with astonishment at the grave damage and ignominy to the Christian name, we hardly think it fitting to pass over in silence these massacres of Christians and our own miseries. Even if the greatest part of these events are well known to the whole world and nevertheless, while the desperation of our situation may appear greater to everyone, yet we, clothed in brevity, are taking care to tell of the sorrowful misfortunes which occurred for nearly eleven years to the eastern people who worship Christ.[86]

Zacosta's bull lays out the series of campaigns the Turks conducted against the Order, starting with Constantinople. He reminds the Knights of the city's strategic importance, its proximity to Rhodes, the death of the emperor, and the desecration of the city. No one felt safe, and some neighboring communities even paid tribute to the Great Turk. Mehmet, inspired by his success, captured or reduced the islands in the Aegean Sea. That done, he attacked the islands of the Order and even the village of Archangelos on Rhodes itself. The Turks looted, burned, and carried away into slavery many of the Order's colonists. Zacosta bewailed their loss, especially since some turned informer and gave the Turks information about Rhodes and its harbors. He recounted the siege of Symi, whose inhabitants held off 7,000 Turks for ten days. But he returned to his tale of woe with the "massacre and ruin of the population of Lesbos," which happened even though the island's inhabitants paid tribute to the Ottomans.[87] Zacosta invited his audience to weep over the destruction of property, the devastation of Eastern Christianity, and the devaluation of Hospitaller properties. The long litany of Ottoman aggression concluded with the financial distress it caused the Order, and the need for its members to pay their debts.

There is better stylistic evidence that Caoursin wrote Orsini's magisterial

bull describing the Ottoman capture of Negroponte in 1470.[88] The phrasing of Orsini's magisterial bull is very similar to that of the *Descriptio,* and the necessity for Christian fortitude as a key element for victory is identical. The narrative of the attack has many similarities to the *Descriptio*: the Turks built wooden bridges to bring artillery and troops to the walls of Negroponte; they tested the fortitude of the inhabitants and frightened those who were not protected by the true faith; everyone within the walls worked together, and no one was spared on the basis of age or sex. But unlike Rhodes in 1480, some of the troops within Negroponte assisted the Turks and caused the city's fall. After the city was captured, children were slaughtered, women raped, youths were denied their religion, and all the poor were enslaved – the same fate that the Turks promised the Rhodians if they did not capitulate.

## The Themes in d'Aubusson's Bulls

Master Pierre d'Aubusson's bulls contain fully-developed rhetorical devices designed to persuade the reader into action. The chancery incorporated into the diplomatic formula the themes that Rhodes was a Christian outpost, surrounded by Turks; that the story of Turkish atrocities perpetuated against Christians would bring tears to the eyes; and that the Knights on Rhodes were fulfilling their responsibility as Christian warriors. D'Aubusson's bulls were almost self-consciously eloquent, with their references to the classical past of Rhodes and its role in Roman history. They also dwelled on the harsh punishments and reprisals for those members of the Order who did not heed the Master's summons.

The magisterial bulls did not communicate all the news from the east, especially when the central convent of the Order conducted diplomatic talks with the Muslims. For example, Pierre d'Aubusson anticipated an Ottoman invasion of Rhodes in 1477, and summoned the Knights from the western priories with vivid descriptions of the Order's manful defense of the citizens of Rhodes and its outlying islands during past attacks.[89] D'Aubusson, however, used diplomacy to postpone the anticipated Ottoman siege of Rhodes.[90] While this gave him more time to prepare for the inevitable, it was a public relations blunder. The prior of Portugal complained about the false alarm, and several knights refused to come to the aid of Rhodes. D'Aubusson faced the perception in the west as being unmanly, weak, or effeminate, by not confronting the Turk.

In 1480, d'Aubusson had clear intelligence that Mehmet was preparing his

fleet to attack Rhodes. Once again he ordered the western priories to come to the aid of the Central convent. This time, however, his bull included a new rallying cry directly addressing the issue of Hospitaller manhood:

> Indeed, the enemy did not lock in close battle with unwarlike troops, or fight with effeminate Asiatics: [but] with soldiers, fighting in established order, with engines, machines of war, and bombards … (*Non faciet enim hostes cum imbelli milite manum conserere, aut cum molli Asiatico pugnare: milite, militans certis pacto, ingeniis, Bellorum machinis, et Bombardis,....*) [91]

Previous magisterial bulls had used the word "*viriliter*" (manfully or powerfully) to describe Christian military actions: the "manly knights of Christ" "manfully" battle the nefarious Turk.[92] Here, for the first time in Hospitaller documents, d'Aubusson contrasts the manliness of the Knights with the weakness of Asiatics. It is not clear who the Asiatics represent; some western writers considered the Byzantines weak because of eunuchs, and Pius II thought Greeks were weak because they refused to recognize the Latin Church.[93] D'Aubusson (or Caoursin) is probably drawing upon Pius II's widely-circulated *Letter to Mehmet*, in which the pope warned Mehmet that in western Europe he would fight men with swords, not women with spears.[94] The idea that swords confer masculinity is also found in Petrarch, who called Arab culture effete because their warriors shot arrows and never came to blows.[95] D'Aubusson's words emphasized that the knights of Rhodes were warriors for the Latin Christian faith, ready to come to blows with the Turk.

Caoursin's official account of the siege, composed immediately after the Knights repulsed the Ottomans, reinforced the themes of Christian masculinity defending the weak by fighting the racial threat posed by the Ottomans. Caoursin emphasized the Christian chivalric virtues of the Knights and their master – their fortitude, astuteness, and steadfastness in their faith – and how these qualities overcame the Turks, who otherwise would have eliminated the native Greek Christians. Caoursin's favorite adverb to describe the fighting of the knights of the order is "*viriliter*," meaning "manfully" or "powerfully." Caoursin contrasts the virility of the knights with the weakness of Asiatics. He describes how some of Mehmet's advisors counseled against the siege of Rhodes, because of the size of the city and the nobility of the knights "(the Asiatics could not be considered their equals) who thought it was better to go meet death than to do anything disgraceful and weak." ("*qui asiaticis pares censeri non debent: quibus mortem potius oppetere quem aliquid turpiter imbecilleque agere animo est*"). Caoursin reiterates the steadfastness of the local Greek Christians and their cooperation with the Knights during the course of the siege. The native Greeks fought with the same courage and determination as the Hospitallers to defend Rhodes and guard it as the refuge

and protection of Christians. The people of the city willingly performed manual labor to strengthen the defenses during the siege. Their devotion to the true faith and to the Hospitallers prevented the fall of the city to the Turks.

Caoursin's style and interpretation followed contemporary trends in humanist historical writing. His training, writings, and his position in the chancery were similar to other humanists. His *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio* was comparable to other examples of history writing done in the service of the state.[96] Stylistically, Caoursin's interpretation and choice of vocabulary clearly demonstrated his adaptation of humanistic conventions to serve the needs of the Order. Like other Italian humanist historians, Caoursin was an eyewitness to the events he describes, but he did not insert himself into the text, nor did he refer to specific documents. His history contained specific names, numbers, and dates. Like other contemporary histories, the chancellor presented his subject as a contest between good and evil. He praised the master and demonstrated his worth against the depravity of his opponents and the severity of his situation. The great villain was Sultan Mehmet II. The secondary villains were the spies and renegade Christians within the walls of Rhodes. He emphasized the Order's Christian mission as the bulwark against the Turks, yet he also assigned classical virtues to d'Aubusson: his fame, birth, excellence, ingenuity, and prudence. He also referred in passing to Rhodes' classical heritage.

Caoursin's *Descriptio* incorporated the key rhetorical themes that experience proved ensured western support and cooperation: the Knights as the ever-vigilant defenders of Christianity, who were never at peace and never sought treaties with the Turks; their military preparedness as steadfast warriors of Christ; their masculinity, which incorporated chivalric ideals (protection of the weak) and a particular mission (fighting the enemies of the faith) with humanist perceptions of the Turk (barbarians at the gate). Christian faith conferred true virility, which was shared by the local Greek population who had accepted the Latin Hospitallers as their defenders against the Turks. Without the Knights, the Turks would pollute the Christian people and obliterate their faith. By winning a victory over the Ottomans, the Knights of Rhodes proved they were manly soldiers of Christ, empowered by their faith in God to triumph over the barbarous Turks.

The *Descriptio* was also the official record of the siege, as referenced in the Order's archives. As such it bears guarantees of authenticity, which accounts for the widespread acceptance among historians for its description of events. Caoursin certainly was present during the events he describes. He may have composed his work from written notes, but these have not survived in the archives of the Order. In addition, he describes other events that he could not have witnessed: the Ottoman plans for the siege of Rhodes, assisted by three

Greek renegades; and the spread of rumors in the Turkish camp, particularly of a vision among the Turks of a shining woman in white that appeared above the walls of Rhodes. These suggest that Caoursin, in his capacity as vice-chancellor, had access to official documents or witnessed interrogations.

## The Publication of the *Descriptio*

Caoursin's *Descriptio* has been called a "European bestseller" because nine different printers throughout Europe produced Latin editions before 1500.[97] Today over eighty copies of the Latin edition survive in the collections of research libraries around the world; these numbers do not include the copies in private hands. The first edition was printed in Venice by Ernst Ratdolt sometime after 19 August 1480; in the same year, it was printed in Parma, Passau, and Bruges. There were additional printings in Louvain (between 1480 and 1483); Barcelona/Zaragoza (1481); Rome and Odense (1482). The last publication was Johann Reger's illustrated edition of the corpus of Caoursin's historical works, printed in 1496. The success of the *Descriptio* was due, in a large part, to the popular market for histories and literature of the crusades.[98] Printers type-set popular crusade histories that had circulated in manuscript format. For example, Roger the Monk's eleventh-century chronicle of the first crusade appeared in a Latin and a German edition, both incorporating the latest news of the Turks.[99] Readers also clamored for works reporting the current battles with the Turks.

Caoursin and d'Aubusson did not delay in getting news of the siege into print. D'Aubusson referred to letters discussing the siege as early as 23 September 1480, when he summoned the Order to come to Rhodes.[100] This could have been his own letter, *De obsidione urbis,* which he addressed to the emperor and published after 13 September 1480. It is also possible that copies of the *Descriptio* were already in circulation. Based upon the good condition of Ratdolt's type and the absence of any decorative flourishes, bibliographers have determined that Caoursin's *Descriptio*, along with another eye-witness account of the siege, Jacobo Curte's *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata*, were printed soon after the Turks left Rhodes on 18/19 August 1480.[101]

Evidence based upon provenance, ownership marks, and colophons suggests that the Hospitallers' European priories commissioned subsequent editions and translations of the *Descriptio.* Fra Domingo Salvador, treasurer of the Castellany of Amposta, paid for the Barcelona edition of 1481.[102] Fra Jacques Galliot (the same commander of Brabant that d'Aubusson imprisoned in 1477)

commissioned a French translation of Caoursin that survives only in manuscript form.[103] The best-known example of such publications is a fifteenth-century Burgundian manuscript written in elaborate gothic script and decorated with full-page illuminations, created for Pierre d'Aubusson.[104] Later grand masters received manuscript copies of the Ulm edition, suggesting that Caoursin's *Descriptio* remained a revered text for the Knights well into the eighteenth century.[105]

In addition to telling the story of a Christian victory over the infidels, the *Descriptio* established a heroic identity for the Order of the Hospital by presenting a positive interpretation of the spirit and morale of the besieged Christians on Rhodes. In this way the *Descriptio* bolstered the sale of indulgences to finance the defense of Rhodes against the Turks. Most of the printers of Caoursin's Latin edition of the *Descriptio* also produced indulgences for the commissioners of the Order.[106] In Parma, Andreas Portilia printed the *Descriptio* in 1480; in the following year, he printed an indulgence on behalf of Christopher, the Order's preceptor in Parma, to promote the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes.[107] Johannes de Westfalia of Louvain, who printed the *Descriptio* sometime between 1480 and 1483, also produced two print runs of indulgences in 1481 for the defense of Rhodes on behalf of the commissioner Fra John de Cardona.[108] In the same year, Fra Rudolfus Werdenberg, the Bailiff of Brandenburg, commissioned two print runs of indulgences from Benedictus Mayr of Passau, who had printed the *Descriptio* in 1480.[109] Fra Werdenberg also ordered indulgences from Eucharius Silber in 1481, who printed an edition of *the Descriptio* in 1482.[110] In Odense 1481, the local Hospitaller priory and John de Cardona, the commissioner, ordered four print runs of indulgences to promote the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes from the printer Johann Snell, who also printed Caoursin.[111]

Unlike the Latin editions, the translations of Caoursin's *Descriptio* do not appear to be connected with the sale of indulgences. For example, the printers of Caoursin's German translation did not print any indulgences for the Order. Nor is there any direct proof for a connection between the English priory and John Kay's translation of Caoursin.[112] John Kendall, the Turcopellier and later Prior of England, was the Orders procurator for the sale of indulgences in England. He commissioned the printer William Caxton to print indulgences in 1476 and 1480.[113] Scholars of English printing, however, have tried and failed to establish a connection between Caxton and Kay. Hie very production of a printed translation suggests that the widespread appeal of the works, which removed the text from the Hospitallers' control.

The *Descriptio* was appropriated and copied by others for their own purposes. At the same time that the *Descriptio* circulated in print, the Latin text and its vernacular translations were copied into manuscripts during the

late-fifteenth century. The tradition of copying books by hand coexisted with the introduction of printing technology, and making manuscript copies of printed books was a common practice in the early days of printing.[114] The scribes may have been unable to afford a printed book; they may only have wanted portions of the text; or they wanted to absorb the text as only a copyist can. Almost all of the manuscripts were the work of unknown compilers. Some, which included Caoursin's history with related texts about the threat posed by the Turks to western Europe, could have been compiled by indulgence preachers as *exempla.* The manuscript in the Budapest National Museum includes Caoursin's *Descriptio* with copies of papal and imperial diplomatic letters and other narrative accounts about the Turks.[115] The composition of two manuscripts in Würzburg and Melk are very similar.[116] It cannot be assumed, however, that such categorical imperatives inspired all the manuscript copies of Caoursin. More than one manuscript contained humanist works. Manuscripts from Lambach and Würzburg contain a fragment of the *Descriptio* in a volume of theology, saints' lives, and decrees from synods.[117] A Freiburg manuscript combined Caoursin with two related works, Laudivius Zacchia's *Epistolae magni Turci* and the *Epitaphium Mahumeti II.*[118]

The *Descriptio* appeared in other printed works, too; the most popular was Bernhard von Breydenbach's *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam,* an illustrated guidebook based on the author's 1483 journey to the Holy Land.[119] Breydenbach's work described the places he visited along the pilgrimage route, included their history and any sites of interest to pilgrims. Erhard Reuwich, a painter from Utrecht, traveled with Breydenbach and drew each city from life.[120] The *Peregrinationes* reproduced his drawings as woodcuts. For more information on the Turkish expansion in the Levant, the reader could turn to the back of the book and read the unattributed accounts of Isidorus, Patriarch of Constantinople, on the fall of Constantinople in 1453; Balthasar Perusino on the capture of Negroponte in 1470; and Guillaume Caoursin's description of the siege of Rhodes in 1480.[121] Breydenbach's book with its pirated edition of Caoursin was published in 1486; by 1490 it had been printed seven times and translated into German, French, Spanish, and Flemish. Its publication kept Caoursin's *Descriptio* in circulation throughout Europe. Reuwich's woodcuts served as a model for the designers of the woodcuts of another extremely popular book, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493), which also included a view of Rhodes.[122]

Caoursin reprinted his *Descriptio* as the first text in his *Rhodiorum historia,* printed by Johann Reger in Ulm, 1496. The *Rhodiorum historia* was an illustrated compendium of Caoursin's historical works, which Caoursin edited himself.[123] In addition to the *Descriptio,* the volume contained Caoursin's account of the earthquake that hit Rhodes in 1481, his oration upon the death

of Mehmet II, his oration before Innocent VIII, the history of Prince Djem's arrival at Rhodes, and a description of the translation of relics associated with John the Baptist from Constantinople to Rhodes. The timing and format of the publication suggests a deliberate effort on the part of the Order to remind Europeans of their immediate history with Mehmet and his sons. It is possible that the publication of Caoursin's histories coincided with a new fund-raising effort to defend Rhodes against the Turks.

The collected works in the volume revealed the aftermath of the 1480 siege. After the death of sultan Mehmet II in 1481, Mehmet's two sons, Bayezid and Djem, fought over the succession. Djem, the younger son, lost to his older brother, who became sultan Bayezid II. Djem sought refuge in Rhodes in 1482, and the Hospitallers negotiated a treaty with Bayezid to keep Djem in custody.[124] Caoursin was one of Djem's attendants when the Order transferred him to France In 1482–1483. Djem remained a high-profile hostage until his death in 1495. While he was alive the Hospitallers and the Ottomans observed a truce. Immediately after Djem's death, however, the Order prepared for the resumption of hostilities. The publication of the Ulm edition, which collected all of Caoursin's historical works into one volume, may have been part of a program to remind Europeans of the past siege and to raise money for a new one.

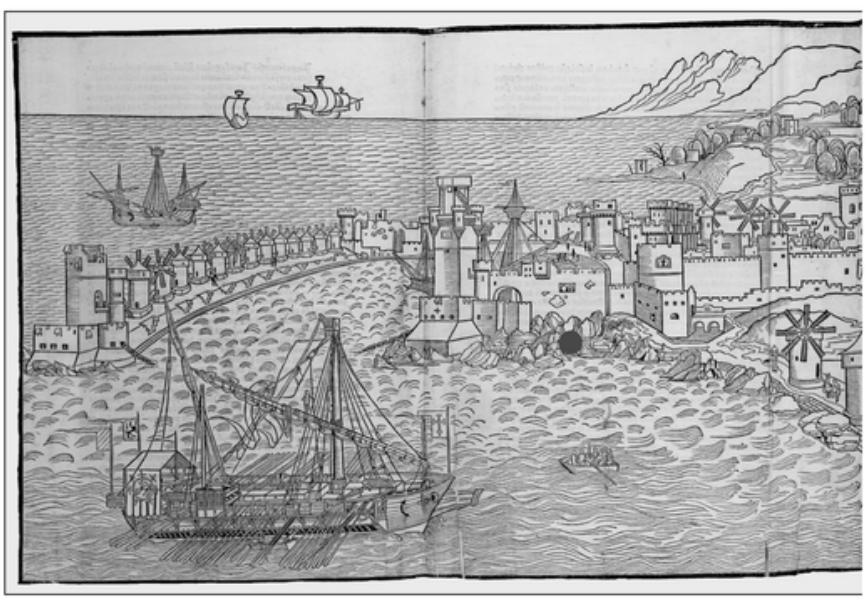
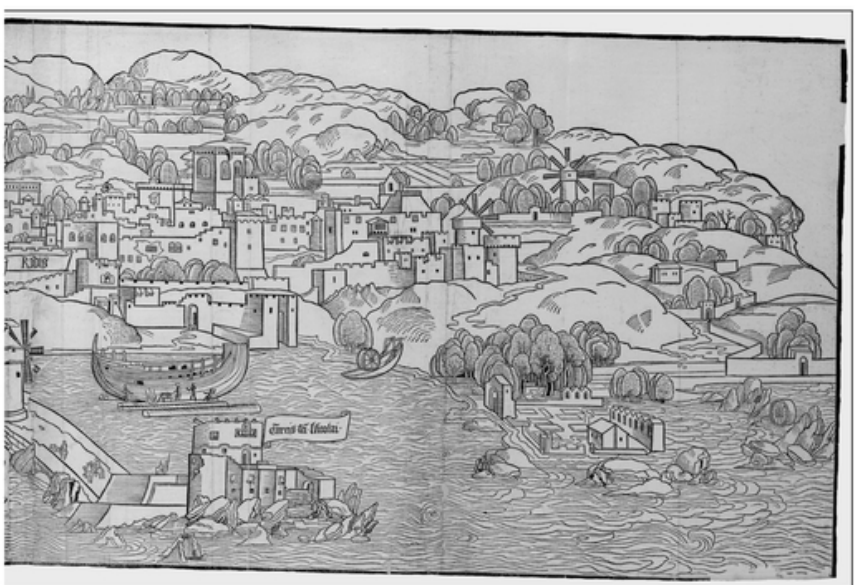


Figure 3.2 Erhard Reuwich, "Rhodes" (1484), from Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinationes in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz: Reuwich, 1486). (Courtesy of the James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota)

The success of Breydenbach's *Peregrinationes* may have influenced the format of Caoursin's *Rhodiorum historia.* Caoursin, as editor, did not make substantive changes to the text of his *Descriptio.* He changed the spelling of some words, added some diphthongs, removed others, and made other minor stylistic changes. But the appearance and layout of the *Rhodiorum historia* volume transformed the reader's experience of the text. In 1496 Caoursin divided the *Descriptio* into chapters, marked by titles, decorated initials, and nine original, full-page, titled woodcuts. The author was depicted in the frontispiece and portrayed in the colophon. Twenty-five woodcuts illustrated the other works in the volume. The high-quality woodcuts represent the city of Rhodes with fair accuracy; the artist was not identified, although some attribute them to Erhard Reuwich based upon stylistic similarities to his work in the *Peregrinationes.*[125]



The illustrations of Caoursin's Ulm edition have little in common with Paris BN Lat MS 6067, a richly-illuminated manuscript created for the Master of the Order, Pierre d'Aubusson.[126] Little is known of the manuscript's provenance, but scholars assume that Guillaume Caoursin commissioned it himself when he traveled to France in the company of Djem in 1482–1483. It is illuminated in the Burgundian style by the Master of the Cardinal of Bourbon, and based on the illuminations it was created between 1480 and 1483; or at least, not before 1498.[127] Some researchers assume that the artist of the woodcuts must have seen the manuscript and created a version of them for the printed edition. Others have speculated about the accuracy of the images and Caoursin's role

in their creation.[128]

Such speculation is inevitable when historians use illustrations as primary sources. But any attempts of visual archeology should take into account the integration of the images into the text and the purpose that they served as a record of the events. In both the Paris manuscript and the Ulm edition, the illustrations and the decorations are an integral part of the text. Both use the full-page illustrations to physically divide the chapters, although the manuscript has three times as many illustrations as the printed book and the texts are divided into shorter chapters. Both the woodcuts and the paintings depict the same major events in the story. In almost every instance, however, the composition and the emphasis differ, displaying distinctly different artistic attitudes towards the narrative structure. Paris BN Lat 6067 devoted thirty-two full-page illuminations to the *Descriptio* alone, showing a myriad of details and frequently conflating narrative elements to depict different episodes happening at the same time. In comparison, the nine woodcuts illustrating the *Descriptio* in the Ulm edition portrayed one event at a time, namely, the one indicated in the caption. A quick comparison of the nine congruent illustrations show that the manuscript artist repeated compositions, particularly a bird's-eye view of the city (used four times), the profile of the tower of St. Nicholas, and the assault upon the walls of the Jews. The woodcut artist did not repeat compositional layouts, but designed a new composition for each woodcut. The artist of the woodcuts created images that reinforced the text by depicting one event at a time. In comparison, the master of the illuminations created complex images that supplanted the text and required the reader to closely study the image and read the story within it.

The design of the Ulm edition represents the culmination of the printer's art in the late fifteenth century, and it presents the new visual vocabulary created by the printed press. The manuscript, in comparison, is the epitome of fifteenth-century illuminated manuscripts. As for accuracy, let it be noted that both artists distorted the appearance of the city of Rhodes. The most obvious example is their depiction of the tower of St. Nicholas, where much of the initial fighting took place. The tower is located on a mole that extends far out into the harbor. Reuwich's original print foreshortened the mole to keep the proportions of the city correct and on the page. The Master of the Cardinal of Bourbon drastically shortened the mole; and the artist of the woodcuts mangled the structure of the harbor completely.

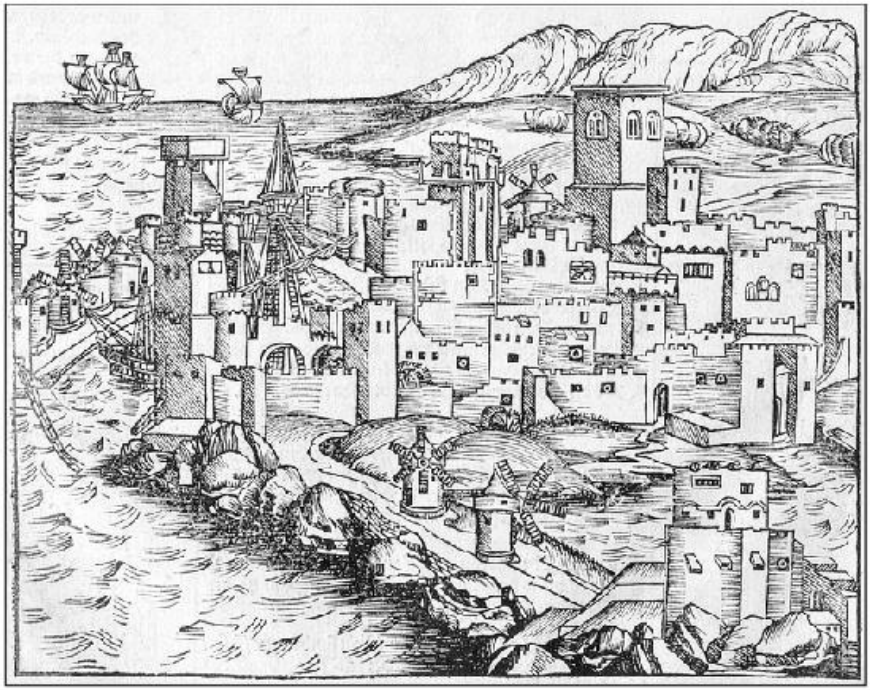


Figure 3.3 Fifteenth-century image of Rhodes from the *Nuremburg Chronicle* (Nuremburg: Anton Koberger, printer, 1493), f. xxviv. The tower and mole of St. Nicholas are in the foreground; behind is the tower of Naillac and to the left is the chain closing off the port. Artists: Michael Wohlgemut, Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. (Arca Artium, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library)

In all, the illustrations were created to show the divinely-inspired victory of the knights of Rhodes over the Ottoman Turks. The illuminations, which are becoming more familiar through modern mass publication, were created for the perusal of one man, Pierre d'Aubusson, the master of the Order. The ultimate intent was to please him. Both sets of illuminations were created under the control of the knights, who distorted their world for their own purposes.

1 AOM 76, f. 35r (old enumeration) f. 50r (new enumeration).

2 See AOM 31, no. 5, dated 17 November 1478, no. 7, dated 22 December 1478; no. 8, 14 July 1489 (handwriting is changed); no. 9, August 1489, scribe not identified but in the same hand. There are enough examples in the archives to suggest that other chancery personnel habitually recorded important entries about themselves in a humanist hand. For example, John Istius de Visso, secretary to the Master, wrote the entry describing Caoursin's 1470 mission to the Roman Curia in a humanistic hand (AOM 74, ff. 39r-v).

3 For example, see Jonathan Phillips, *Defenders of the Holy Land, Relations Between the Latin East and the West, 1119–1187* (Oxford, 1996); Penny J. Cole, *Ihe Preaching of the Crusades to the Holy Land, 1095–1270* (Cambridge, MA 1991); Sylvia Schein, *Fideles Crucis: The Papacy, the West, and the Recovery of the Holy Land 1274—1314* (Oxford,

1991); and Housley, *The Later Crusades*.

4 See Chapter 5, pp. 152–175.

5 Marsilius of Padua, *Defensor pacis* (Toronto, 1980), p. 162: Discourse Two, Chapter VIII, "Division of Human Acts."

6 See Joseph M. Brincat, "The Languages of the Knights: Legislation, Administration and Diplomacy in a Multilingual State (14th-16th Centuries)," in *Language and Diplomacy*, edited by Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik (Msida, 2001), pp. 261–279, for an analysis of the use of written and spoken Latin, French, and Italian among the Knights and in the chancery.

7 James Fenton, "A Room of One's Own," *Neu< York Review of Books* (13 August 1998), review of Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), described the difficulties faced by the scholarly Fra Sabba di Castiglione as a member of the Order in the 16th century.

8 Johannes Trithemius, *De laude scriptorium (In praise of scribes)*, translated by Elizabeth Bryson Bongie, edited with introduction by Michael S. Batts (Vancouver, 1977), advocated the continuation of monastic scriptoria in 1492 as a useful pietistic exercise that also preserved books.

9 See Eric Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago 1981), 45–46, 333–334; John Monfasani, "Bessarion Latinus," *Rinascimento*, ser. 2, 21 (Florence, 1981), pp. 201–204; James Hankins, "Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmed II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995), 111–207; and Norman Housley, "A Necessary Evil? Erasmus, the Crusade, and War against the Turks," in *The Crusades and Their Sources, Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, edited by John France and William G. Zajac (London 1998), 259–279.

10 Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 62; Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk* (Nieuwkoop, 1967), pp. 57–81; Michael J. Heath, *Crusading Commonplaces: La Noue, Lucinge and Rhetoric against the Turks* (Geneva, 1986), p. 27; and Mustafa Soykut, *Image of the "Turk" in Italy: a history of the "other" in early modern Europe, 1453–1683* (Berlin, 2001), pp. 24–25.

11 Monfasani, "Bessarion Latinus," pp. 180–181; Pius II, *Epistola ad Mahumetem* (Cologne: Ulrich Zel, about 1467–1470).

12 See Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton, NJ, 1966); Gary Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas: Politics and Propaganda in Fifteenth-century Milan* (Oxford, 1988), p. vii; Angelo Poliziano, *Della Congiura dei Pazzi (Coniurationis Commentarium)*, edited by A. Perosa (Padua, 1958), translated into English with introduction by Elizabeth B. Welles, "The Pazzi Conspiracy" in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, edited by Benjamin G. Kohl and Ronald G. Witt (Philadelphia 1978), 293–322.

13 See Theresa M. Vann, "Guillaume Caoursin's *Descriptio obsidione Rhodiae* and the Archives of the Knights of Malta," in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, edited by Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky (Budapest, 2001), pp. 109–120.

14 Guido Sommi-Picenardi, *Itinéraire d'un chevalier de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem dans l'île de Rhodes* (Lille, 1900), p. 129; Nicolas Vatin, *Sultan Djem* (Ankara, 1997), p. 89.

15 See Caoursin, *Rhodiorum historia* (1480–1489), Ulm 1496, "Guillelmi caonrsin (sic) Galli Beige Duacri Rhodiorum vicecancellarii de translatione sacre dextre sancti ioannis baptiste christi…."

16 Luttrell, *Town of Rhodes,* pp. 49–50, n. 236. This identification is based on name, proximity, and the identification of Fra Guillaume Caoursin in a crossed-out entry found in AOM 348, f. 12v. Luttrell does not address Sommi-Picenardi's statement, p. 129, that Caoursins father was born in Rhodes, a tradition based upon Pauli, *Codice diplomatico*, 2:551.

17 AOM 382, f. lr-v, 21 April 1474, Master Orsini to Fra Jacques Calliot, Preceptor of Brabant (priory of France), concerning Adrian Caoursin, "nostri scutiferi." Vatin, *Sultan Djem*, p. 89, identifies Adrian as Guilleme's brother. Adrian fought in the siege of 1480, and afterwards received a commendation and a safe-conduct to return to Flanders: see AOM 387, f. 212v, cited in Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:360, n. 42.

18 See, for example, AOM 76, f. 16; AOM 282, f. 101 b (1462). Caoursin apparently advised Marcus Montanus, the Latin archbishop of Rhodes, to study at the University of Paris: Vincent J. Flynn, "The Intellectual Life of Fifteenth-Century Rhodes," *Traditio* 2 (1944): 248.

19 AOM 366, f. 84v (lxxxiiiib), f. 163v, I67r. Bosio, *Dell'Istoria,* 2:204, states that Caoursin became vice-chancellor when Bandini traveled to Rome as the Order's Procurator-General at the Curia in 1459. (See AOM 369, f. 10, for Bandini's trip to Rome.) This has influenced Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers' Historical Activities, 1400–1530," in *Latin Greece, the Hospitallers and the Crusades 1291–1440*, London 1982, section II, p. 146; and Vatin, *Sultan Djem*, p. 89. It appears, however, that Caoursin was working in the Rhodian chancery before then.

20 AOM 366, ff. 161v–163v, Bull recorded by Caoursin as vice-chancellor (in Italian), undated; ff. 165r–167r, bull in Italian, *"Ita est G. caoursin vicecancellarius."*

21 AOM 352, f. 152( 150)r, published Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschafi*, pp. 633–634, no. 17.

22 Maroma Camilleri, "The Chancery of the Order of St. John," in *Guardians of Memory: Essays in remembrance of Hella Jean Bartolo Winston,* edited by Charles J. Farrugia (Rabat, 2008), p. 159. For the development of the Hospitaller chancery in this period, also see Anthony Luttrell, "The Hospitallers: Early Written Records" in *The Crusades and Their Sources, Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, edited by John France and William G. Zajac, London 1998, 135–154; idem, "The Hospitallers' Historical Activities, 1400–1530"; and idem, "Notes on the Chancery of the Hospitallers of Rhodes: 1314–1332," *Byzantion* 40 (1970): 408–420. Also see Theresa Vann, "Hospitaller Record Keeping and Archival Practices" in *The Military Orders, Welfare and Warfare,* edited by Helen Nicholson, London 1998, 275–285. For the fifteenth-century chancery, see Sarnowsky, *Macbt und Herrscbaft*, pp. 301–344.

23 AOM 1649, *Collezione di statuti e ordinazioni*, ff. 254–260. Heredia also provided a rudimentary formula for magisterial bulls, stipulating that the bull should include such basic information as the name of the Order and of the master.

24 AOM 1698, *Statuta promulgata in capitulo generali Romae anno 1446 habito*, f. 87r.

25 Luttrell, "Hospitaller Historical Activities, 1291–1400," in Anthony Luttrell, *The*

*Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece and the West 1291–1440*, London 1978, section XVII, p. 2.

26 See, for example, Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography*, esp. pp. 49–60; Robert Black, *Benedetto Accolti and the Florentine Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1985); and Donald J. Wilcox, *The Development of Florentine Humanist Historiography in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1969).

27 Guillaume Caoursin, *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum Militum sacri ordinis S. Joannis Hierosolymitani* (Paris, 1493), xv, vii; see also Jyri Hasecker and Jürgen Sarnowsky, editors, *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum militum: Die Statuten des Johanniterordens von 1489/93* (Göttingen, 2007), pp. 164–168.

28 AOM 282, f. lv.

29 The publication of Caoursin's French translation is dated ca. 1493–1495; a dated Latin edition was printed in Venice in 1495. Johann Reger of Ulm printed an illustrated edition in 1496, the same year he printed the *Rhodiorum historia*.

30 AOM 362, fol. 182(183)v, 27–28 June, 1450. Published by Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft*, pp. 633–634, n. 20.

31 AOM 282, f. xia: "*Per me vicecancellarium fuerono lecta et vulgaricata illic publice altra est intelligibili vere ad omnium ibi existentium bonam intelligentiam.*"

32 AOM 282, f. 46r, 10 November 1454.

33 AOM 282, f. xiiii.

34 AOM 282, f. vii b.

35 AOM 282, f. 55,11 October 1459.

36 AOM 282, f. 55b.

37 AOM 359, f. 96(94)v, 5 October 1447; published Sarnowsky, *Macbt und Herrschaft*, pp. 632–633, n. 18.

38 Camilleri, "Chancery of the Order of St. John," p. 159.

39 AOM 282, ff. 168, 169, 7 April 1467, 16 April 1467. This might be the earliest surviving volume of the series *Liber conciliorum* (AOM 73, *Liber Conciliorum. M.M. de Milly et Zacosta. Ann. 1459–1466).*

40 AOM 282, f. 52r, 1459; Camilleri, "Chancery of the Order of St. John," p. 159.

41 AOM 372, f. 212r (ccxiii a), 24 May 1462.

42 AOM 282, f. lv a, 11 October.

43 AOM 282, ff. lxiiii a, lxxii b.

44 See AOM 282, lxxiii a-b, for a ruling concerning the debts of the priory of St. Gilles, which was issued as a bull; also see f. lxxiiii a, which refers to bulls, *stabilimenta*, and other business transferred to the chancery; AOM 282, f. lv b, where a dispute is resolved by consulting the *rotuli*; also AOM 371, f. 31r, 20 June 1461, for consultation to establish the date and purpose of a particular mission; and AOM 385, f. 52r-54v (lii a-liiii b), 31 December 1477, where information was registered "for the aid of future memory."

45 AOM 282, f. 99.

46 Camilleri, p. 161.

47 AOM 282, f. 114a, *De preeminen cancellarii.*

48 AOM 282, f. 114b.

49 AOM 282, ff. 113v-114v.

50 AOM 375, f. 132r (cxxxii a), 17 July 1465.

51 AOM 376, ff. 205r-v (ccii a-b); AOM 283, f. 7b[ivb].

52 AOM 283, f. 60v.

53 AOM 378, ff. 183r-v, 18 July 1469.

54 AOM 74, f. 39r-v, 222r, 27 July 1470; Vatin, *Sultan Djem*, p. 92.

55 AOM 379, ff. 224r-226v.

56 AOM 283, f. xlvi.

57 AOM 380, f. 213v; also AOM 315, p. 362, and AOM 380, f. 78v 26 November 1471: *"...de verbo ad verbum in libris notres cancellarie pro nostrum vicecancellarium ad futuram rei memoriam registrari et in hanc formam publicam nil addito aut remoto explicari..."*

58 AOM 283, ff. xlvi b, liii b.

59 AOM 283, f. lvii b.

60 AOM 283, f. lviiii a. Also AOM 315, p. 351.

61 AOM 283, f. lxxix b.

62 AOM 383, f. 144r-v (cxliiii a-b), 6 October 1476.

63 For examples of magisterial bulls with lists of recipients, see AOM, 364, f. 2v, 6 May 1453, names ff. 3r-4r; AOM 387, ff. 2v-6r.

" AOM 283, f. clvi b.

65 AOM 283, f. clxiiii b.

66 AOM 1129, f. 228v, 12.XI.1479.

67 AOM 387, f. 79r (Ixxviiiia).

68 Setton, *Papacy and the Levant*, 2:347, note 4, for a brief description of the chancery records from the period immediately before and after the siege found in Malta, Valetta, National Library, AOM 387, ff. 159–211.

69 AOM 387, f. 19v; see Appendix, no. 6, p. x.

70 AOM 76, f. 57v.

71 AOM 76, ff. 187–188,188–189.

72 Luttrell, "The Hospitallers' Historical Activities, 1400–1530," p. 146; also see Thomas Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471–1527)* (Tübingen, 1986), p. 341, no. 880 for Caoursins entry as a humanist member of the papal chancery.

73 Reger printed a second edition of the *stabilimenta* at the same time: *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum militum.* Ulm: Johann Reger, 23 Aug. 1496.

74 AOM, 78, f. 68v, 22 November 1496, "super locumtenentia Cancellarii." .

75 Luttrell, "The Hospitallers'Historical Activities, 1400–1530," 146. 0n 20 July 1501,

Bartholomew Politianus was elected vice-chancellor and received into the Langue of Italy (AOM 79, f. 16V; Bosio, *Dell'Istoria*, 2:540).

76 AOM 82, f. 87r.

77 AOM 387, f. lr.

78 AOM 372, f. ccxxxiiii a (233r)- f. 235v (CCXXXvib), 4 November 1462; Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," pp. 164–168, no. 4.

79 Bonnie Millar-Heggie, "Sanctity, Savagery and Saracens in *Capystranus:* Fifteenth Century Christian–Ottoman Relations," *Al-Masāq* 14 (2002): 113–121. Other battle accounts began a tale of Turkish attack with the fall of Constantinople, such as *Capystranus,* a sixteenth-century English romance in verse that recounts János Hunyadi's defense of Belgrade in 1456.

80 Setton, *Papacy and Levant*, 2:138–139.

81 AOM 364, ff. 5v-6r. The register records the text of the bull to the priory of France, and notes that a similar bull was sent to Aquitaine, Auvergne, Campania, Toulouse, England, Baroli, Capua, Rome, Lombardy, Catalonia, Castellany Amposta, León and Castile, Navarre, Portugal, Venice, Germany, Bohemia, and Hungary. The bull to the priory of England, Ireland, and Scotland was registered in AOM 364 f. 117r. It is the same bull, with the difference that the master did not send a messenger as he did to the priory of France.

82 Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," p. 160: "Cum summa cordis nostri amaritudine fraternitati vestre intimamus magnum Teucrum, inimicissimum Christianorum, cum vertisset animum ad urbem Constantinopolim habendam, earn sexcentis, ut ferunt, milibus pugnatorum obsedisse et demum die vigesima nona mensis maii proxime elapsi, vi armorum, magna christianorum strage, cepisse. In qua omnia crudelitatis, impietatis et habominationum genera exercuit, ut nichil crudelius dici aut excogitari queaat. Imperatorem vero Grecorum fortiter bello defunctum inter cadavera perquisitum et inventum, ac si viveret, decapitari iussit. Nobiliores et principes illius urbis infelicissime, filiis eorum prius ante ora parentum interfectis, trucidavit. Urbem totam inpredam dedit. Classis Christianorum, que in auxilium imperatoris venerat, capta est: paucis dumtaxat navibus Januensiumet triremibus Venetorum vix vacuis nautis, nam reliqui bello perierant, exceptis que celeritate evaserunt: Peram, Januensium Civitatem sine armis magnus Teucer prefatus optinuit. Muros illius solo equavit, incolis censum imposuit et id facturum de Constantinopoli creditur. Classem suam de novo restaurat infestaturus omnes huius Orientis insulas, ut temptet eas vel tributarias facere vel delere." Also Zacharias N. Tsirpanlis, *Unpublished Documents Concerning Rhodes and the South-East Aegean Islands from the Archives of the Order of St. John, vol. 1 (1421–1453)* (Rhodes, 1995), pp. 709–713b, no. 308.

83 AOM 364, f. 9r, 21 January 1453/4. Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," p. 162: "…sumus in tanto periculo nos et omnes nostre insule propter eius nostris locis propinquitatem et amplissimam potentiam et summam suorum subditorum et militum obedientium, ut quo nos vertamus ignoremus. Habet namque hanc nostram insulam Rhodi presertim ipse magnus Teucer in pectore et ad illius devoracionem fauces agitat…"

84 AOM 364, f. 196v, 2 February 1453/4; Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," p. 163: "Tragedia rerum infelicissime gestarum per omnia secula decantanda poetis subicitur! Omnibus principibus seculi datur intelligi, audita clade tarn inclitissime urbis, quantum sit rebus secundis parva fides danda, et blandientis fortune munera quantum decipiant homines

qui se ei totos dedierunt. Trahuntur per Europam et Asiam more pecudum agmina christianorum captivorum catenis et funibus vincta, venduntur, vilipenduntur, ut nihil miserabilius dici queat. Commoveri omnes domini christiani ad pietatem et misericordiam deberent et omnes concurrere ad vindicandum sanguinem qui efFusus est et liberandum Greciam et Asiam ab infidelium potestate. Quod nisi fiet, incendium hoc ulterius serpet, devoraturum alias provoncias in obrobrium nomen domini nostri Jhesu Christi profitentium."

85 Ibid.: "Habet namque hanc insulam nostram Rhodi in pectore et ad illius devorationem fauces, mentem et cogitationem convertit. Disponit suis gestis Alexandri Magni gesta superare."

86 AOM 372, f. ccxxxiiii a (4 November 1462); Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," p. 164: "Cogitantibus nobis huiusmodi Religionis afflicte calamitates et pericula, dignum videtur potius nobis perpetuo deflendum esse quam vires nostras cladibus permolitas inanibus curis exponere; sed ubi gravem nominis christiani lesionem et ignominiam intuemur, haud quaquam congruum arbitramur hasce Christianorum strages et nostras miserias silentio preterire: quarum quidem etsi magna pars toti orbi notissima sit, tamen quo nostri status tenuitas omnibus magis appareat, plebis orientalis Christum colentis lugubres casus, qui ab annis fere undecim obtigerunt, subcincta brevitate curamus enarrare."

87 AOM 372, f. ccxxxiiii a (4 November 1462); Valentini, "L'Egeo dopo," pp. 166–167: "Nunc sermonem convertamus ad Lesbiorum perennem lachrymandam stragem et ruinam, omnium novissimam. Erat enim Lesbos insula ob terrorem tanti tyramni tributo subdita…."

88 See the Appendix of this book for the text of the bull.

89 AOM 385, f. lv, 1 July 1477.

90 Vertôt, *Histoire,* 1:365–366.

91 Paoli, *Codice diplomatico,* 2:148–149, no. 125.

92 See AOM 370, ff. ccxvii b–ccxviiii a, 21 November 1460, for the "manful" defense of

93 Soykut, *Image of the Turk*, pp. 18–21, from Picolomini's *Description of Asia and Europe*, composed 1453–1461.

94 Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, p. 86.

95 Ibid., p. 51.

96 Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography*, vii. See Beatrice R. Reynolds, "Latin Historiography: A Survey, 1400–1600," *Studies in the Renaissance* 2 (1955): 7–66, for a survey of Latin humanist history writing in Europe that, unfortunately, omits Rhodes.

97 Butler, *The Siege of Rhodes,* p. 22: Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1997), pp. 177–178.

98 For example: Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, p. 101; John L. Flood, "Printed Books as a Commercial Commodity in the Fifteenth Century," in *Incunabula and their Readers: Printing, Selling and Using Books in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Kristian Jensen (London, 2003), pp. 139–151, discusses the influence of the market on printers' inventory.

99 Robertus de Sancto Remigio, *Historia Hierosolymitana*. Latin: Cologne: Printer of Dares,

ca. 1472; German, Augsburg, Johann Bämler, 1482.

100 AOM 387, ff. 17v, 19v, 23 September 1480; see Appendix, pp. 352–361, no. 6.

101 Jacobus de Curte, *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata* (Venice: Erhard Ratdolt, 1480). Alfred W. Pollard, Robert Proctor, Victor Scholderer, Bonaventura Kruitwagen, and Wouter Nijhoff, *Catalogue of books printed in the XVth century now in the British Museum.* (London, 1962): 5:283, based the date upon the condition of the type, which appears new, and the absence of woodcut initials.

102 Barcelona 1481 edition, colophon: "*Rhodie urbis a turchis obsidio: venera[n]di Fratris Dominici Salvatoris: Castellanie emposte eiusde[m] ordinis thesaurarii opera impressa: Finit feliciter pridie k[a]l[enda]s Marcii. Anno M°. cccc. lxxxi.*"

103 London, British Library Add. 41062: f. 2r-2v.

104 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Lat. 6067.

105 Valletta, National Library of Malta, LIBR 160, an 18th-century manuscript in Italian of Caoursin's *Descriptio* dedicated to Grand Master Lascaris. Parchment, with illuminations and line drawings, based on the Ulm edition of Caoursin. Rebound. Flyleaf (paper): "Libro Rimesso in Cancelleraria dal Venerando. Priore di Barletta fra Sigismondo Picolomini li 8 Giugno 1750, quand fere Ritorno da Toscana. H. Cavallere Fran[cesco]so Guedes Vicecancell[arie]." Valletta, National Library Libr 227, is a similar manuscript on paper containing, among other things, Caoursin's *Oratio* before Innocent VIII.

106 Early printers produced indulgences and anti-Turkish treatises for the same audience. See Robert Schwoebel, "Coexistence, Conversion, and the Crusade against the Turks," *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965), 183–184.

107 Indulgentia 1481, For promoting the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes (Parma: Andreas Portilia, 1481), ISTC No.: ic00474300.

108 Indulgentia 1480. For promoting the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes (Louvain: Johannes de Westfalia, 1481), ISTC Nos.: ij00273460, ij00273465.

109 Indulgentia 1481. For promoting the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes (Passau, Benedictus Mayr, 1481), ISTC Nos.: iwOOOl 1870, iw00011872.

110 Indulgentia 1481. For promoting the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes. (Rome, Eucharius Silber, 1481), ISTC Nos.: iwOOOl1877, iwOOOl1880.

111 Jacob Isager, *Guillelmi Caoursin descriptio obsidionis urbis Rhodie perjohannem snel in ottonia impressa anno dñi 1482/Guillaume Caoursin Beretning om belejringen af byen Rhodos* (Odense, 1982), p. 145; Indulgentia 1481. For promoting the war against the Turks and the defense of Rhodes (Lübeck: Johann Snel, 1481), ISTC ID numbers: ij00273600, ij00273630, ij00273660, ij00273700.

112 See Theresa M. Vann, "John Kaye, The Dread Turk, and the Siege of Rhodes," from *The Military Orders. Volume 3: History and Heritage,* ed. Victor Mallia-Milanes (Aldershot, 2007), pp. 245–252.

113 Albert E. Hartung, ed., *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500* (New Haven, 1989), p. 2713. Pollard and Redgrave, *A Short Title Catalogue of Books*, nos. 14077 c. 106–123, lists twenty-four English indulgences printed to raise money to fight the Turks or to ransom their Christian captives. Five of these (nos. 107–111) were printed on behalf of John Kendall for the defense of Rhodes in 1480. For the personal

relationship between Caxton and Kendall, see George Painter, *William Caxton: A Biography* (New York, 1977), pp. 104–105; for Kendall as the commissary for indulgence sales in England in 1480, see Paul Needham, *The Printer & the Pardoner* (Washington, DC, 1986), pp. 32–33.

114 See: Curt F. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book* (Philadelphia, 1960), pp. 34–39; Cora E. Lutz, "Manuscripts copied from Printed Books," in *Essays on Manuscripts and Rare Books* (Hamden CT 1975), pp. 131–165; Sandra Hindman, "Cross-Fertilization: Experiments in Mixing the Media," in *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing*, by Sandra Hindman and James Douglas Farquhar (College Park, 1977), pp. 101–141; and M. D. Reeve, "Manuscripts Copied from Printed Books" in *Manuscripts in the Fifty Years after the Invention of Printing*, edited by J. B. Trapp (London, 1983).

115 Budapest, Magy. Nemzeti Muz., no. 210, f. 184v, indicates that the text was copied from a printed book; also see J. Valentino Adrian, *Catalogus Codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae academicae Gissensis* (Frankfurt, 1840), p. 77, for Gissing (Gissensis) B. S. Ms. 87, a 17th-century manuscript copied from the Ulm edition.

116 Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. ch. q. 156, complete text; Melk, Stiftsbibliothek Codex Mellicensis 751,2 (730), ff. 265a-279a: Guilelmus Coarsinus, Rhodiorum vicecancellarius, Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio (fragment).

117 Stiftsbibliothek Lambach, Codex Lambacensis chartaceus 326, ff. 81a-83a: Guilelmus Carorsin, Rhodiorum vicecancellarius, *Obsidionis Rhodie urbis dissertacio* (fragment).

118 Freiburg, Universitatsbibliothek, ms. 21.

119 Hugh Wm. Davies, *Bernhard von Breydenbach and his Journey to the Holy Land* (London, 1911), pp. vi-vii; Noonan, pp. 35–44.

120 Davies, pp. iii, xxi.

121 Davies, pp. ix-xi.

122 Charles Talbot, "Landscapes from Incunabula to Altdorfer," *Gesta* 15 (1976): 324.

123 *Rhodiorum historia* (1480–1489) Ulm: Johann Reger, October 24, 1496. Thirty-six woodcuts. See also Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel Digital Library, stable link: http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=inkunabeln/236-4-hist-2f

124 Nicolas Vatin, *L'Ordre de Saint-Jean-de-Jérusalem, l'Empire ottoman et la Mediterranée orientale entre les deux sièges de Rhodes 1480–1522* (Louvain, 1994), pp. 161–187.

125 Bernhard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (Mainz, Erhard Reuwich, 1486). William Morris speculated that Reuwich also created the woodcuts for Caoursin's *Rhodiorum historia*, but this has not been substantiated. See Alfred W. Pollard, *Fine Books* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1964), p. 108. Also see Arthur M. Hind, *An Introduction to a History of Woodcuts*, 2 vols. (New York, 1935) 2:318–319 for a brief discussion of Reger's woodcuts.

126 *El sitio de Rodas: Bibliothe nationale de France, Ms. lat. 6067, 2 vols.* (Madrid, 2006), facsimile edition.

127 François Avril and Nicole Reynaud, *Les manuscrits à peintures en France 1440–1520* (Paris, 1993), p. 274 and Nicolas Vatin, *Sultan Djem*, pp. 96–97, favor the earlier date. Luttrell, *Town of Rhodes*, p. 50 n. 237, favors the later date for the illuminations.

128 Luttrell, *Town of Rhodes*, p. 50.

# Chapter 4
# Guillaume Caoursin, *Descriptio obsidionis Rhodiae*

This published edition is based upon three printed Latin texts: the edition Erhard Ratdolt printed in Venice, 1480; the edition printed in Odense, 1482; and the text Johann Reger published in Ulm in 1496 as part of the *Rhodiorum historia* (a collection of Caoursin's historical works dated between 1480 and 1489, which the author edited and emended). Some of the varients from the Barcelona edition and the illuminated Paris manuscript are noted, but the texts of both proved too corrupted to be of much help.

It was necessary to collate several incunables to produce this translation. The first generation of printed books had more similarities to manuscripts than to modern books. Printers used type faces that resembled script, so they contained abbreviations that scribes developed to save space and pen strokes. The works that appeared in different editions, such as the *Descriptio obsidionis Rhodiae*, demonstrate that printers, not authors, determined titles, chapter divisions, and decorative elements. The same text could vary from printer to printer, and even change within a single print run.

Thus the text of Caoursin's *Descriptio* varied slightly among all the printed editions. Some of these variations are the results of different typesetters using different typefaces to set the text block. Some are typographic errors, which proofreaders may have caught and fixed before the end of the print run. A rushed or incompetent printer may have misread the text and corrupted it. In a perverse way, the popularity of a work increased the chances for its corruption. It is no wonder that Caoursin chose to do his own proofreading at the press when he revised the Ulm edition.

In this edition, the editorial revisions from the Ulm text are incorporated into the Venetian text as footnotes, with some exceptions. Ratdolt's edition used a font that contained an "e" with a cedilla-like tail ("ę"). This can be interpreted as a Latin abbreviation for "ae." Subsequent editions, however, did not expand the abbreviation, and it was not corrected in the Ulm edition. Therefore this edition transcribes "c" as plain "e," and not as "ae." Ratdolt consistently abbreviated "et" with an ampersand; later editions expanded the abbreviation. The printer Jonathan Snell of Odense consistently spelt "ti" as "ci." Although not found in the other editions consulted, it is an acceptable spelling variation and as such it has not been noted or corrected. Obvious printing or

spelling errors are noted in the footnotes. Paragraph breaks in the Latin text are based upon the Ulm edition.

While this edition was in preparation Marios Philippides published a transcription of the *Descriptio*, using the copy in the Gennadius Library in Athens as his source. Philippides's intent, to publish translated western sources for Mehmet's military campaigns against Constantinople, Negroponte, and Rhodes, is praiseworthy. These sources are difficult to obtain outside of research libraries and English translations are non-existent. Philippides's transcription of Caoursin's *Descriptio*, however, proceeded without consideration for the dangers of working directly from one incunable. His edition contains innumerable errors that go far beyond modernizing the punctuation.[1] Philippides obtained his transcription from the copy of the *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio* owned by the Athens Gennadius Library, which he wrongly assumed was the edition Eucharius Silber printed in Rome in 1482. The *Incunabulum Short Title Catalogue* (hereafter ISTC) and the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendruck* both identify the Gennadius Library's copy as the Parma edition, printed by Andreas Portilia in 1480.[2] The ISTC entry also notes that the copy of the *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio* owned by the Athens Gennadius Library is missing a page.[3] Philippides, unaware of this error, reproduced it in his transcription and omitted the equivalent of one page of text. Somehow his translation patched over the gap, which resulted in the Turks preparing to inflict atrocities upon the Rhodians immediately after the Hospitallers and the Turks exchange words through their ambassadors:

> Philippides, p. 302: Dum Turcis maiori conatu, ingenio arteque resistitur, isporum insania incenditur. Pudet quippe eos, tantum exercitum, || iugulandos ec qui vivi capti essent palis quos ad id ex<s>equendum mil<I>ia octo paraverant cruciandos civitatis ditione Turcorum tyranno reservata.

Compared with Caoursin's full text (Philippides' omitted section italicized):

> Vann and Kagay, pp. 134–138: Dum turcis maiori conatu: ingenio: arteque resistitur ipsorum insania incenditur. Pudet quippe eos tancum exercicum *non prevalere: et sui tyranni formidolosam potentiam a Rhodiis contemni. Furibundi itaque machinis mortariis sagittis cathapultis dies noctesque urbem lacessunt: infestant: deterrent: experirique satagunt si rhdiorum animi facinora obire preclara audeant: quemadmodum preclara et magnifies verba proferunt. Secundum igitur alteram prelium ad turrim molis divi Nicolai commissum diebus septem et triginta exactis: vires in urbis menia augent: faciemque cvitatis deturpant. Nova quidern urbs crassissimo muro cincta turribus in celum erectis ornata antemuriali quoque et propugnaculis aptissimis munita trium milium quingentorum spericorum saxorum frequentissimis ictibus laceratur: deturpatur: demolitur. Eamque ruinam plereque domus civium et magistratus palatia perornata ac magnifica patiuntur: ita ut prioris urbis facies penitus perdita videretur: ac tamquam gigantei cadaveris sarcina prostrnta iaceret. Attoniti sunt plurimorum animi sed princeps vir quidem magna sapientia generositate atque magnanimitate preclaris ac magnificis*

*comitatus equitibus: pugnatorumque globo fortissimo stipatus: spem in deum immortalem ac filium eius dominum nostrum ihesum christum: eiusque genitricem precursoremque sanctum Iohannem baptistam dirigens: cunctorum mentes solidat. Nec defuerunt magnanimi baiulivi: priores: preceptores: ac fratres sacri ordinis hierosolymitani pariter negociatores: indigeneque et greci: qui pro fide orthodoxa fortiter pugnare non formidant. Non deterrebat profecto animos murorum formidanda ruina: non metum incutiebat facilis hostium ascensus: non machinarum impetuosissimi iactus mentes perturbant. Autumant turci parvo momento urbem subigere. Putant nostri spe et fide pleni mahumetanam gentem facile propulsatum iri. Hinc turci in aurora et solis occasu ad ripam fossarum fistulis et tympanis turcensibus solitum cantum edunt; exultantque de futura victoria. Nostri in pomerio tubarum clangore iubilant. Princeps noster preclarissimus ingenti acumine preditus prope diem hostilem invasionem futuram coniectat. Maturo igitur consilio presidia menium instituit. Hisque prestantes viros preficit: subsidia quoque non negligit: quibus et electissimos sui ordinis cuiusuis nationis baiulivos et equites preesse voluit: qui presto casu urgente adesse debeant. Ipse vero partes subsidii non recusat. Quinimmo assiduo labori non parcens: in pomerio menium lapsorum residet: illic somnum quamvis non diuturnum sumit: cenitat versatur. Magistri vestigia strenuissimus quisque sequitur: nec primi: nec mediocres: nec infimi onus recusant. Turci vero in castris preconis voce promulgant urbis supellectilem in direptionem transituram: impuberem etatem sub iugum ut fidem abneget mittendam. Provectos vero et adolescentes ad unum* iugulandos et qui vivi capti essent palis quos ad id exequendum milia octo paraverant cruciandos: civitatis ditione turcorum tyranno reservata.

In addition to working from a defective exemplar, Philippides' transcription also contains evidence that suggest he attempted to correct Caoursin's Latin (textual differences italicized):

| Vann and Kagay, p. 78 | Philippides, pp. 262, 264: |
|---|---|
| Rhodie urbis obsidionem descriptums: causas in primis narrare institui: *que*turcomm tyrannum mahumetnm potissime impnlerunt: ut tanto conatu Rhodios aggrederetur.Licetenim cum turcis non parva dissidia Rhodii *habuerint*.tamen cum eo quinunc imperat: post Constantinopolis expugnationem gravia gessere bella.Inimicus quidem *vires indies* augens insolentior *redditur*. Cumque quatuor *et* viginti annorum curriculo *conplures sibi vicinas ditiones subegisset*. animo inflatus *egre* admodum tulit Rhodiamurbem *equitumque hierosolymorum* ditionem finitimam eius imperioliberam | Rhodiae urbis obsidionem descripturus, causas in primis narrare institui, *quae*Turcorum tyrannum *Mahum <m >elum* potissime impulerunt ut tanto conatuRhodios *aggredetur*. Licet enim cum Turcis non parva dissidia Rhodii *hauerint*, tamen cum eo, qui nuncimperat, post Constantinopolis expugnationem gravia gessere bella.Inimicus quidem *in dies vires* augens insolentior *traditur*. Cumque quattuor ac viginti annorum curriculo *complures* sibi *vicinas urbes subegisset*, animo inflatus *aegre* admodum tulit Rhodiam urbem *Hierosolymorumque equitum*ditionem finitimam eius imperio liberam absolutamque esse, |

| | |
|---|---|
| absolutamque esse. Maxime *que* diverso tempore *quatuor* classibus instructis castella et rhodiorum agros invaserit: obsederit: oppugnaverit: exquibus ignominiam discrimen et cladem reportavit. | maxime *quod* diverso tempore *quattuor* classibus instructis castella et Rhodiorum agros invaserit, obsederit, oppugnaverit,ex quibus ignominiam, discrimen etcladem reportavit. |

Philippides corrected the spelling of five words in this, the first paragraph of Caoursin's *Descriptio*. This is a matter of editorial preference, although the current trend in editing medieval texts calls for keeping the original spelling. Philippides transposed four words, "in dies vires" (for "vires indies") and "Hierosolymorumque equitum" (for "equitumque hierosolymorum"). Ideally, such transpositions should not affect the translation, because Latin word order does not determine the meaning of the sentence. It is the missing word and the substitution of words that are of concern, because not only can these can hinder an accurate translation, but also they suggest that inadequant care was taken with the transcription. Furthermore, Philippides changes verbs and verb forms: "aggrederetur" to "aggredetur," and "redditur" becomes "traditur."The pattern continues throughout his transcription, which contains many examples of dropped words, substitutions of other words, and, in places, correction or substitution of verbs and verb forms (textual differences italicized):

| Vann and Kagay | Philippides |
|---|---|
| p. 146: Fatendum quoque est: hanc victoriam celo *demissam* esse. | p. 308: Fatendum quoque est hanc victoriam caelo *demissa* esse. |
| p. 148: Extemplo *pugna* commissa ad primum lapidem castra et papilionesturd collocant: machinas ad littusmaris devehunt: et navigiis *onerant.* | p. 310: Extemplo *ponunt* commissa ad primum lapidem castra et papiliones Turci collocant machinas ad littus maris devehunt et navigiis *onerariis…* |

It is not the purpose of this publication to revise Philippides, but to publish the text of Caoursin's *Descriptio* in a modern edition and to make it accessible to researchers. The *Descriptio* merits recognition as a widely-read eyewitness description of a city under siege. The bibliography that follows demonstrates that it circulated widely in printed and manuscript form. The number of surviving copies was determined when this book went to press, and it does not include copies in private collections. Consult the online *Incunabulum Short Title Catalogue* for updated statistics.

# Editions of Guillaume Caoursin, *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio*

Identification numbers assigned by the *Incunabulum Short Title Catalogue* (ISTC) (London, British Library, 1980–2012) and the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (GW) (Leipzig, 1925–2012).

**Early Printed Latin editions**:

- Venice: Erhard Ratdolt, after 19 August 1480.

  - ISTC ID number: ic00108000
  - GW ID number: 6004
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 44
  - Electronic facsimile: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, http://mdzx.bib-bvb.de/bsbink/Ausgabe_C-86.html.

- Parma: Andreas Portilia, after 19 August 1480

  - ISTC ID number: ic00109000
  - GW ID number: 6005
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 5

- Bruges: Colard Mansion, between 19 August 1480 and 1484

  - ISTC ID number: ic00109300

-

  - GW ID number: 6006
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 2

- Louvain: Johannes de Westfalia, between 19 August 1480 and 1483

  - ISTC ID number: ic00109350
  - GW ID number: 0600610
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 2

- Passau: Benedictus Mayr, 13 December 1480

  - ISTC ID number: ic00109400
  - GW ID number: 6007

- Number of reported copies in ISTC: 3

- Zaragozaor Barcelona: Paul Hurus and Johann Planck, 28 February 1481

  - ISTC ID number: ic00109500
  - GW ID number: 6008
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 5
  - Printed facsimile: Matilde López Serrano, "Incunables españoles: <<Obsidionis Rhodie descriptio>> de Guillermo Caoursin," *Revista Bibliográficay Documental*, Suplemento No. 1, T. 1 (1947), 1–6.

- Rome: Eucharius Silber, ca. 1482

  - ISTC ID number: icOOl10000
  - GW ID number: 6009
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 15

- Odense: Johann Snell, 1482

  - ISTC ID number: icOOl10500
  - GW ID number: 6010
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 2
  - Printed facsimile: Jacob Isager, *Guillelmi Caoursin descriptio obsidionis urbis Rhodie per johannem snel in ottonia impressa anno dñi 1482/Guillaume Caoursin Beretning om belejringen af byen Rhodos* (Odense, 1982), with modern Danish translation.

- Ulm: Johann Reger, 24 October 1496

  - ISTC ID number: icOOl13000
  - GW ID number: 6003
  - Number of reported copies in ISTC: 76
  - Electronic facsimile: Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/236–4-hist-2f/start.htm

Early Printed Translations:

- *Danish*

  - *Haer begynnes then strijdh aff Rodijs,* translated by Gotfred af Ghemen, Copenhagen (?) 1508 (?).
  - Facsimile:*Facshnile-udgaveafTyrkens TogtilRhodos* (Copenhagen,

1910).

- *Italian*

  - Venice: Erhard Ratdolt, after 19 Aug. 1480
  - ■ ISTC ID number: icOOl 12500
  - ■ G¥ ID number: 6013
  - ■ Number of reported copies: 8

- *English*

  - Westminster/London: Printer of the Siege of Rhodes, between 1482 and early 1483. Translated by John Kay.

    - ■ ISTC ID number: icOOl 11000
    - ■ GW ID number: 6012
    - ■ Number of reported copies: 6

  - Reprinted: A. Murray in *The Crusades* (chapters 57, 58, 59, 60, and 61 of Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Etnpire),* London, K. Murray and Son, 1870
  - Facsimile editions: Gulielmus Caorsin, *The siege of Rhodes* ,1482). *The English Experience. Its Record in Early Printed Books published in Facshnile,* Number 236 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970); GuiUaume Caoursin, *The Siege* ***of*** *Rhodes* (1482) Translated by John Kaye, and Aesopus, *The Book of Subtyl Histories and Fables ofEsope* (1484). Introduction by Douglas Gray. Delmar, NY 1975.

- *Ger?nan*

  - Passau: Benedictus Mayr, 1480–1481.

    - ■ ISTC ID number: ic00111500
    - ■ GW ID number: 6011
    - ■ Number of reported copies: 1

    - Strassburg: Matthias Hupuff, ca. 1502.

      - ■ ISTC ID number: icOOl 12000
      - ■ GW ID number: 6 Sp. 116a
      - ■ Number of reported copies: 5

    - *Historia von* ***Rhodis,*** *wie ritterlich sie sich gehalte* ***rnit***

*detn Tyrannischen Keiser Macho?net vss Turckye, lustig vh lieplich zu*

- *lesen. (Wer die statt Rhodis erpauwen, vnd wo von sie yren nammen vnnd anfang habe.-Der stat Rhodis belagerūg in lateyn beschrieben durch herr Wilhelm Caonersin, Cantzler zu rhodis, vn neulich in teutsch sprach trāsferiert nachgond' wysse von Ꝺohāne Adelpho, etc.) [With woodcuts.].* Translated by Johannes Adelphus. Strassburg, Martinus Flach, 1513.

    - Critical edition: Bodo Gotzkowsky, *Historia von Rhodis; Die Türckisch Chronica* (Berlin/New York, 1980)

**Manuscript copies**:

- Budapest, Magy. Nemzeti Muz. (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár), MS 210, folios 173–178, fifteenth century, fragment. Emma Bartoniek, *Codices Manu Scripti Latini Vol. 1 Codices Latini Medii Aevi.* (Budapest, 1940), p. 178.
- Freiburg im Breisgau, Universitätsbibliothek, MS. 21, folios 5772v. Hagenmaier, Winfried. *Kataloge der Universitätsbibl. Freiburg im Breisgau II Die lateinischen tnittelalterlichen Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek.* (Wiesbaden, 1974), 19.
- Giessen, Universitätsbibliothek, 234 (B.S. Ms. 87, fol.). Kristeller, *Iter italicum*, J. Valentino Adrian, *Catalogus Codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae acadetnicae Gissensis* (Frankfurt, 1840), p. 77, no. 234. Seventeenth-century copy of the Ulm 1496 edition.
- Laxnbach, Stiftsbibliothek326, ff. 81a-83a. Fragment; explicit: "In classis adventu quidam turci equistres pedestees que versus urbis mema auditia quadam fecti irruunt Eruptione autem."
- London, British Library, Arundel 388, fifteenth century, fragment.
- Melk, Stiftsbibliothek 751,2 (730), ff. 265a-279a. Full text, copied from the Passau edition printed December, 1480 (colophon).
- Paris, Bibliotheque National, Ital. 898, ff. 3–12. Latin text; seventeenth century.
- Paris, Bibliotheque National, Lat. 6067, fifteenth century. Facsimile edition: *El sitio de Rodas: Bibliothe nationale de France, Ms. lat. 6067,* 2 vols. (Madrid, 2006).
- Paris, Bibliotheque National, Lat. 6068, fifteenth century.
- Sienne, Biblioteca communale, K III 33, sixteenth century, ff. 1r-15v, copied from the Parma edition of 1480.
- Valletta, National Library, Libr 160. Italian translation of Caoursin's

*Descriptio*, copied into an eighteenth-century parchment manuscript. Illuminations and line drawings based on the Ulm 1496 edition.

- Valletta, National Library, Libr 227. Italian translation, same text as Libr. 160, but with expanded abbreviations, copied onto paper and dedicated to Grand Master Lascaris (1636–1657).
- Vatican, Biblioteca apostolica, Lat. 11 813, fragments, seventeenth century.
- Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. ch. q. 136, fifteenth century, dated 1481–1485, ff. 129r-146v, Guilielmus Carosin Obsidionis Rhodie Urbis Descriptio (Latin). Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg, Hans Thurn, and Werner Williams-Krapp. *Die Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Würzburg*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1970, vol. 4, p. 26, 28.
- Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M.ch.q. 156, fifteenth century, ff. 279–297v. Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Iter italicum*. Volume 3: *Australia to Germany*. (Leiden, 1983), 747.

**Other Published Works by Caoursin:**

*Ad Innocentium VIII papam oratio.*

- Rome: Eucharius Silber, after 28 Jan. 1485
- Rome: Stephan Plannck, after 28 Jan. 1485

*Fondetnent de I'ordre de la chevalerie des hospitaliers de saint jehan baptiste de iherusalem.*

- Paris: Pierre Le Dru, between 5 Aug. 1493 and Apr. 1495. (Caoursin's French translation of *Stabilimenta Rhodiorum militum*)

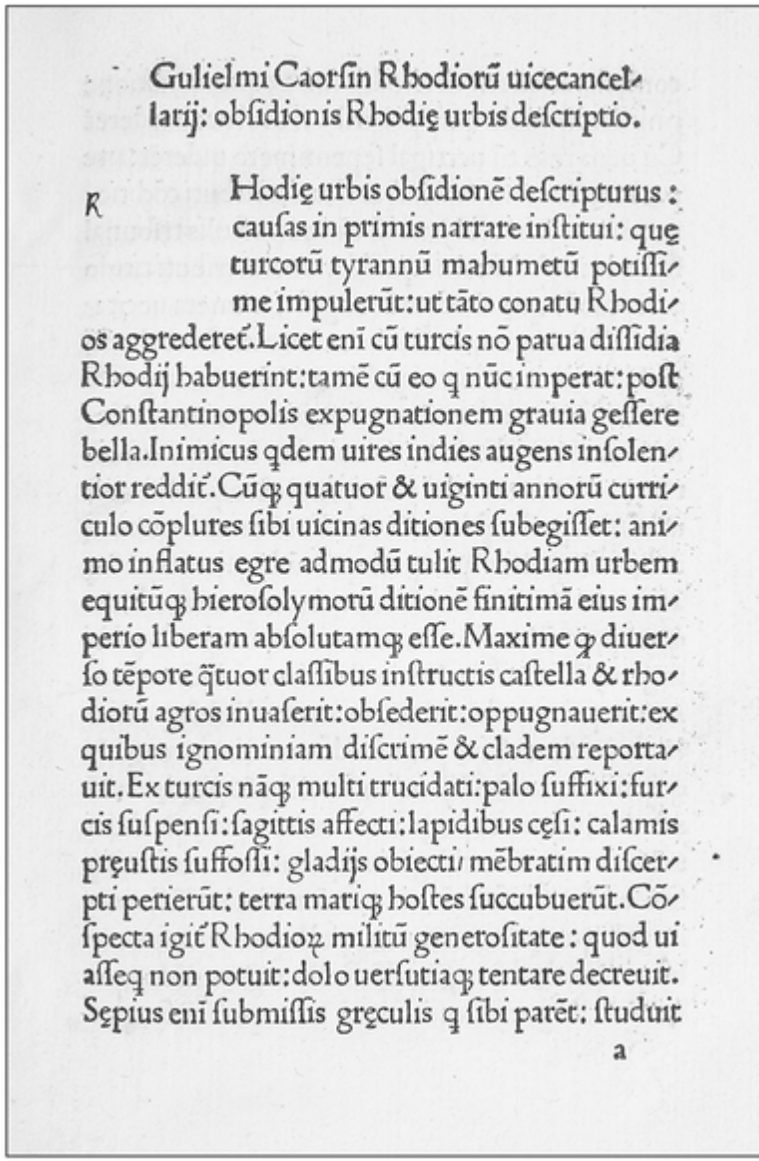
*Stabilimenta Rhodiorwn militum.*

- Venice: Bernardinus Stagninus, de Tridino, 28 June 1495
- Ulm: Johann Reger, 23 Aug. 1496

*Rhodiorum historia* (1480–89)

- Ulm: Johann Reger, 24 Oct. 1496, with woodcuts.
- Contents: Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio; De terrae motus labe, qua Rhodii affecti sunt; Oratio in senatu Rhodiorum de morte Magni Turci habita pridie Kal. Iun. MCCCCLXXXI; De Zizimi regis casu commentarium; De foedere per Rhodios cum Baiazet Turcorum rege inito commentarium; De admissione Zizimi regis in Gallias exhortatio;

De translatione sacrae dextrae S. Iohannis Baptistae ex Constantinopoli ad Rhodios commentarium; De expeditione Turcorum classis a. MCCCCLXXXIV incohata neque peracta notitia; Ad Innocentium papam VIII. Oratio; De traductione Zizimi fratris Magni Turci ad urbem Romam commentarium.



Guliel mi Caorſin Rhodiorũ uicecancel-
larij: obſidionis Rhodię urbis deſcriptio.

R Hodię urbis obſidionẽ deſcripturus:
cauſas in primis narrare inſtitui: quę
turcorũ tyrannũ mahumetũ potiſſi-
me impulerũt: ut tãto conatu Rhodi-
os aggrederet. Licet enĩ cũ turcis nõ parua diſſidia
Rhodij habuerint: tamẽ cũ eo q nũc imperat: poſt
Conſtantinopolis expugnationem grauia geſſere
bella. Inimicus qdem uires indies augens inſolen-
tior reddit. Cũq; quatuor & uiginti annorũ curri-
culo cõplures ſibi uicinas ditiones ſubegiſſet: ani-
mo inflatus egre admodũ tulit Rhodiam urbem
equitũq; hieroſolymotũ ditionẽ finitimã eius im-
perio liberam abſolutamq; eſſe. Maxime q; diuer-
ſo tẽpore q̃tuor claſſibus inſtructis caſtella & rho-
diorũ agros inuaſerit: obſederit: oppugnauerit: ex
quibus ignominiam diſcrimẽ & cladem reporta-
uit. Ex turcis nãq; multi trucidati: palo ſuffixi: fur-
cis ſuſpenſi: ſagittis affecti: lapidibus cęſi: calamis
pręuſtis ſuffoſſi: gladijs obiecti: mẽbratim diſcer-
pti perierũt: terra matriq; hoſtes ſuccubuerũt. Cõ-
ſpecta igit̃ Rhodiorũ militũ genetoſitate: quod ui
aſſeq non potuit: dolo uerſutiaq; tentare decreuit.
Sępius enĩ ſubmiſſis greculis q ſibi parẽt: ſtuduit

a

Figure 4.1 The first folio of the 1480 Ratdolt edition of Caoursin's *Descriptio*. The printer deliberately left blank the square in the upper left hand of the text block for the addition of a four-line hand-drawn decorated initial. The small "R" printed in the center of the blank space tells the artist which initial to draw. (Malta Study Center, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library)

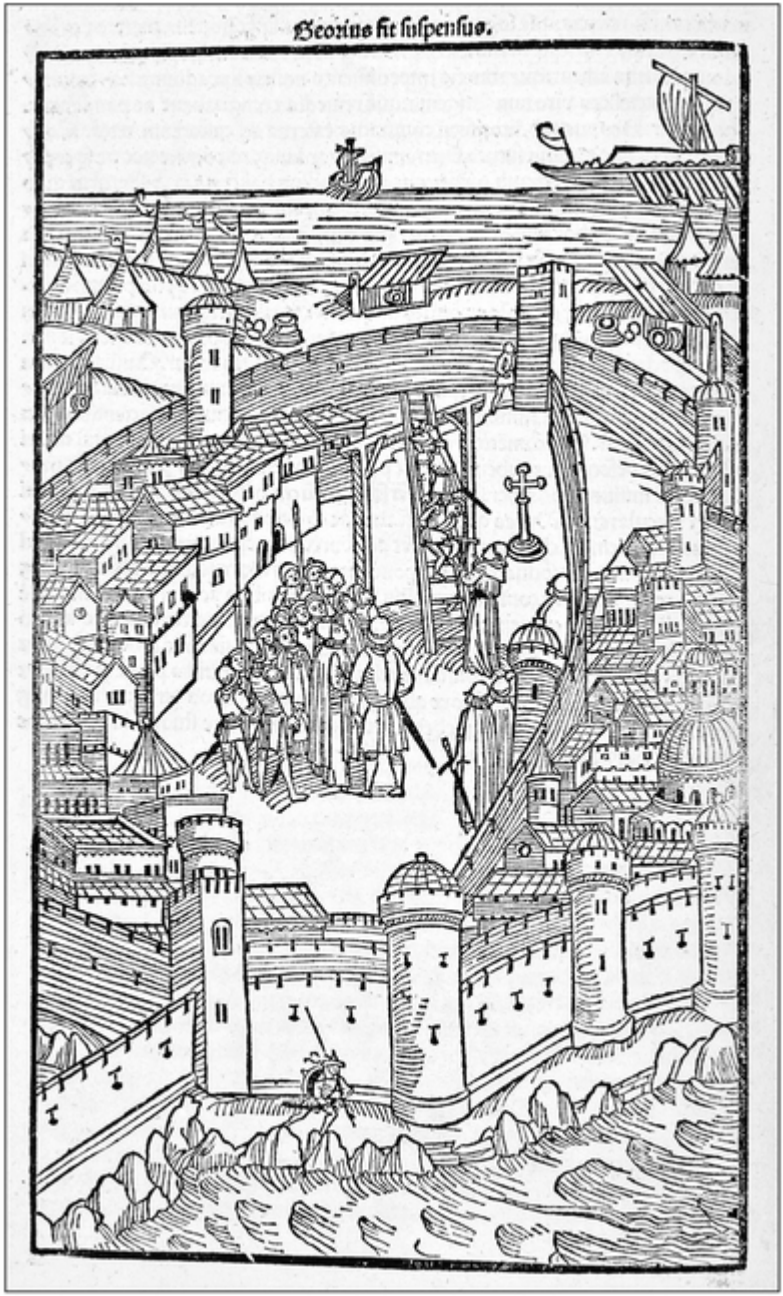



Figure 4.2 The execution of Master George. From *Rhodiorum historia* (Ulm, 1496). (Courtesy of the Magistral Library and Archives, Rome)

# Obsidionis Rhodie urbis descriptio[1]

Gulielmi Caorsin Rhodiorum Vicecancellarii:

Rhodie urbis obsidionem descripturus: causas in primis narrare institui: que turcorum[2] tyrannum[3] mahumetum[4] potissime impulerunt: ut tanto conatu Rhodios aggrederetur. Licet enim cum turcis[5] non parva dissidia[6] Rhodii habuerint: tamen cum eo[7] qui nunc imperat: post Constantinopolis expugnationem[8] gravia gessere bella. Inimicus quidem vires indies augens insolentior redditur. Curnque[9] quatuor et viginti annorum curriculo conplures[10] sibi vicinas ditiones subegisset:[11] animo inflatus egre admodum fulit Rhodiam urbem equitumque hierosolymorum[12] ditionem finitimam eius imperio liberam absolutamque esse. Maxime que diverso tempore quatuor classibus instructis castella et rhodiorum agros invaserit:[13] obsederit: oppugnaverit:[14] ex quibus ignominiam discrimen et cladem reportavit.[15]

# Description of the Siege of the City of Rhodes

Guillauxne Caoursin, Vice-Chancellor of the Rhodians

I am about to describe the siege of the city of Rhodes: but first I will relate the reasons that so powerfully impelled Mehmet, the tyrant of the Turks, to attack the Rhodians with such great force. Although they had fought many conflicts with the Turks, nevertheless, after the conquest of Constantinople, Mehmet waged even more serious wars. In addition, the enemy, increasing his strength, grew more insolent than before. And, after twenty-four years, during which time he had subjugated to his will several of his neighbors, it saddened his spirit to know that the city of Rhodes, the principality of the Knights of Jerusalem, that bordered him, was free and absolutely out of his power. He was especially infuriated since on four separate occasions, he readied his fleet for battle and invaded, besieged, and attacked the castle and fields of the Rhodians; from these actions he gained dishonor, damage, and disaster.[1] Ex turcis[16] namque multi trucidati: palo suffixi: furcis suspensi: sagittis affecti: lapidibus[17] cesi: calamis preustis[18] suffossi: gladiis obiecti membratim discerpti

perierunt: terra [19] marique hostes succuberunt.[20]

Conspecta igitur Rhodiorum militum generositate:[21] quod vi assequi non potuit: dolo versutiaque tentare[22] decrevit. Sepius enim submissis[23] greculis qui sibi parent; studuit confederationem[24] cum rhodiis inire equa conditione permissa:[25] dummodo quippiam[26] tributi titulo concederetur. Cum vero reiectum vectigal sepenumero[27] videret:[28] arte pacem tractat: eam ratam habet si tacita tributi conditione: orator hierosolymorum[29] cum munusculis tribunal suum adeat. Arbitratus quidem munera[30] tributi titulo accepturum:[31] que rhodiorum magistri[32] munera[33] vocitaret. Fallitur quoque hostis hoc commento. Nec rhodii conditionem recipiunt: eique coniungi contemnunt:[34] que fidem christi[35] persequitur: quam ex[36] professionis voto tutantur defendunt iuvant.[37] His de causis[38] rabidus hostis odium contra rhodios inexorabile[39] concipit:[40] menteque destinavit urbem si posset perdere: et rhodiorum nomen penitus[41] delere.[42] Many of the Turks were slaughtered: impaled on stakes, hung from gallows, struck by arrows, crushed by stones, brought down by flaming missiles, slain by swords, and torn apart limb from limb. By land and sea the enemy perished.

Knowing, therefore, that he could not match by force the military excellence of the Rhodian Knights, Mehmet decided to try cunning and trickery. Having subjugated the Greeks very often, he attempted to enter into an alliance with Rhodes permitting them equal standing, providing it should be conceded under the guise of tribute.[2] But in fact he saw this matter of tribute repeatedly rejected, so he negotiated peace by cunning. He considered the treaty ratified if the condition of tribute was secret. The ambassador of the Order, bearing token gifts, came to his court. Mehmet assumed he could accept under the guise of tribute that which the master of Rhodes called presents. However, the enemy was wrong in this assumption. The Rhodians did not accept the arrangement and they rejected an alliance with one who persecuted the Christian faith, which the vows of their Order required them to guard, to defend, and to aid. For these reasons, the enraged enemy conceived an inexorable hatred against Rhodes, and he resolved to ruin the city and to annihilate thoroughly its very name.

Impulsus quoque est quorundam persuasionibus[43] qui ad turcos[44] defecerant: abditaque urbis cognorant.[45] Inter quos primum locum obtinuit vir nepharius et perditi[46] ingenii Antonius[47] meligalo rhodius non infimo loco natus qui rem domesticam iam pridem dilapidaverat. Is rei domestice penuria ductus diutius[48] cogitans quo nam modo[49] rhodiis infensus[50] esset. et patrie cladem afferret: urbis propugnacula. turres monia.[51] abdita loca. munitiones diligentius speculatus: civitatisque[52] situm. edificia[53] describens: ad turcum[54] traiecit. Constantinopoli[55] quoque degens vane pollicitationis[56] spe urbis potiunde data: quendam Bassam[57] greculum ex nobili paliologorum[58] familia

natum ad nephandum facinus allexit.[59] Secutus[60] est huius vestigia euboycus[61] quidam Demetrius Sophiana:[62] vir quidem superstitiosus[63] et maleficus: qui post euboycam[61] direptionem ad turcum[65] defecit: aliquando quoque rhodi[66] habitavit. et postea nuncii[67] nomine de pace

Moreover, Mehmet was moved by the persuasions of certain defectors to the Turks who knew the hidden places of the city. The most notable of these was a nefarious man of treacherous nature, Anthony Meligalo of Rhodes, who had been born to a noble family but had wasted his domestic fortune. Reduced to poverty, he had for a very long time planned how Rhodes could be attacked and his homeland devastated. He observed the defenses of the city: its ramparts, walls, towers, approaches, and its hidden places, and drew a plan describing the buildings and the layout of the city and sent it to the Sultan. He came to Constantinople giving hope of gaining control of the city (of Rhodes), which was a false promise. There he met a Greek, Mesīḥ Pasha, from the noble family of Paleologus, whom he lured into his nefarious crime.[3] Following the same path was a Euboean, Demetrius Sophiana, a very superstitious and evil man who, after the pillaging of Euboea, defected to the Turks. At some point he had lived in Rhodes and then, in the office of ambassador, had engaged in peace tractavit. Hic etiam suasor obsidionis extitit.[68] Exactis[69] itaque his[70] in[71] ordinudis[72] suadendisque annis tribus. tandem res Basse[73] placuit.

Profuit ad id inducendum apostatarum plurimorum qui fidem abnegarunt[74] iniquitas qui perversorum suasus probarunt. Asserebat proditor Antonius[75] urbem non nullis[76] locis veteribus: muris vetustate collapsis facile inimico patere: ac paucos cives defensoresque adesse: et plerumque commeatuum triticique penuria laborare: subsidia quoque a longinquis[77] regionibus rhodios expectare: que tempori adesse non poterint. Idem testatur Demetrius. Id quoque sequaces[78] astipulantur. His iactis fundamentis suadebant facinus aggredi oportere. Dum hec Bisantii[79] agitarentur Rhodiorum clarissimus princeps et[80] magister Petrus daubusson:[81] vir quidem magno excellentique[82] ingenio ac prudentia illustri[83] familia apud galliam celticam natus quern ea non latebant: divino instinctu ductus[84] vetustiora urbis loca delapsa et minus munita toto triennio magnifice erexit: munivit: ampliavit[85]: excogitavitque frumenti vim[86] magnam et commeatuum copiam[87] comparare. Religiososque ac[88] mercenarios milites accire quo urbem tueretur: pro quibus devehendis et conducendis epistolas mandatorias ad diversas orbis provincias destinavit. Ita nutu dei et magistri[89] opera civitas munitur: commeatus comparantur: naves milites[90] ad tuitionem accedunt. negotiations.[4] This creature also advocated a siege. Therefore, after three years spent in making plans and in arguing over them, the Pasha was finally pleased with the plan.

He benefitted from the influence of many apostates who had abjured the faith and who approved of the schemes of evil men. Anthony the traitor

asserted that the city was a ruin in several places, with collapsing old walls that would easily lay open to the enemy. There were few defenders and citizens, and they would be troubled by a lack of provisions and grain. The Rhodians expected these reserves to arrive in time from a great distance. Demetrius testified likewise, and his retainers also agreed. After discussing these preparations, they agreed how the evil deed ought to be carried out.

While these things were taking place in Byzantium, the famous prince and master of Rhodes, Pierre d'Aubusson (a man of great excellence and ingenuity as well as prudence, born of an illustrious Gallo-Celtic family), was not unaware of these matters. Moved by divine inspiration, within three full years he massively built up, fortified and extended the older parts of the city. He devised ways to stockpile large amounts of grain and wine and to procure copious amounts of provisions. He dispatched communiques to different parts of the world to summon knights of the order and mercenary soldiers to defend the city. Thus by the will of God and by the hard work of the master, the city was fortified; supplies were collected; soldiers and ships came to its defense. Proditor Antonius[91] horum[92] inscius arbitratus omnia negligentius[93] apud rhodios preteriri instigat Bassam[94] ut properet et rem memoratu dignam aggrediatur. Idipsum[95] suadere conatur Demetrius.

Quo effectum est ut Bassa[96] ad turcum[97] ea ex ordine referret. Sepius quoque inter turci[98] satellites re agitata de Rhodie urbis expugnatione consultatur. De qua varia oritur sententia: quibusdam asserentibus[99] rem penitus inanem esse: nec id posse facile consequi:[100] ob urbis magnificentiam[101] et militum generositatem: qui asiaticis pares censeri non debent:[102] quibus mortem potius oppetere[103] quern aliquid turpiter[104] imbecilleque[105] agere animo[106] est: aliis rem facilem causis assertis[107] affirmantibus: nec tam parvo tempore quibusuis magistrum providisse. Quare si cum celeritate et[108] diligentia exercitus maritimus atque terrestris comparetur: urbem haud dubio expugnatum[109] iri putant. Accersiuntur ad hanc consultationem diffiniendam machinarum viri periti: inter quos numeratus est Georgius[110] vir vafro subtilique ingenio qui ex Chiis[111] ad turcum[112] dudum defecerat. Constantinopoli quoque degens uxorem et liberos nutriebat: a turco[113] dilectus et plurimis gratiis[114] dotatus Is aliquando rhodi fuerat: urbem que[115] tabula Unaware of these matters, the traitor Anthony, who very arrogantly decided to ignore all the preparations of the Rhodians, goaded the Pasha to hasten and undertake this matter worthy of commemmoration. Demetrius recommended the same.

It was agreed that the Pasha would bring these things to the attention of Mehmet. The Sultan consulted with his retainers very frequently about taking the city of Rhodes. Various opinions about it emerged. Some asserted the undertaking to be entirely worthless and impossible to accomplish easily,

because of the immensity of the city and the courage of the knights (the Asiatics should not be considered their equals) who thought it was better to go meet death than to do anything disgraceful and weak. Others asserted that it could be easily done since the master could not prepare for so many things in such a short time. They thought the city might be captured if an army could be mobilized speedily and carefully by sea and by land. Men skilled in the operation of guns were summoned to this consultation: among them was George, a man cunning, subtle, and clever, who defected to the Turks from Chios shortly before this. In Constantinople, where he lived and supported a wife and children, he was favored by Mehmet, who gave him a great number of gifts. He was once at Rhodes: and he drew designaverat. sed tunc non tam munita[116] fuit.[117] Preterierant namque anni viginti ab eo tempore quo earn viderat. Descripserunt et turci[118] iussu plures egregii artifices rhodie urbis situm. sed Georgius[119] cunctos superavit. Magnis itaque rationibus adductis vicit tandem sententia: ut urbis oppugnatio magna vi fieret:[120] hoc[121] fundamento inherentes nullos tam crassos muros esse qui machinarum impetu demoliri non queant.

Magnamque turci[122] esse potentiam. qui duo imperia: duodecim regna: tot provincias: totque urbes subegit. Hostem quoque non[123] parum movit rhodie urbis situs ad comparandas classes aptissimus: insuleque celebritas magnis laudibus ab antiquis predicata: quam ob loci magnificentiam: aeris[124] salubritatem: et ad orientis provincias subigendas comoditatem: potentes quondam Romani[125] benivolam et sibi amicam reddidere. Putatque si hac potitus fuerit: finitimis subactis ditionibus: fines suos per egeum[126] ioniumque pelagus facile perlaturum.[127] Resistentibus itaque quibusdam preclaris Bassis atque in sinistrum[128] presagientibus: classis instauratur: exercitusque comparatur. Decretum[129] est ut milites terrestre iter faciant: traiectoque hellesponto[130] per asiam in lyciam[131] que rhodiorum insule[132] adiacet pergant. et per fretum lycium[133] a phisco antiqua continentis civitate duo de[134] viginti milibus passuum distante rhodum[135] navigent. reliquos[136] vero machinarum et belli ingeniorum apparatus cum parte copiarum classe devehitur. Bassa[137] a diagram of the city, but it had been twenty years since he had seen it and it was not so well fortified then. By Mehmet's command many skilled experts drew up the layout of the city of Rhodes, but George's plan surpassed them all. Therefore after all these opinions were considered, the following argument won out: that an attack should be made on the city with great force. Those holding this opinion claimed that no matter how thick the walls, they would not be able to withstand an assault with guns.

Moreover, the power of the Great Turk was immense; he had subjugated two empires, twelve kingdoms, and many provinces and cities. Also, the location of the city of Rhodes, which was most suited for fitting out fleets,

equally inspired the enemy. The fame of the island was proclaimed in antiquity with great praise for the magnificence of its location, the salubrity of its air, and its convenience for subjugating the eastern provinces. The powerful Romans had once extended friendship to them. Mehmet reckoned if he could win this island, along with neighboring lands, his power would easily extend through the Aegean to the Ionian Sea. The aforesaid Pasha, resisting certain positive facts, had a premonition that this plan would turn out badly. Nevertheless the fleet was readied and the army prepared. It was decided that the soldiers should make their way by land and cross the Hellespont through Asia to Lycia, which is adjacent to the island of Rhodes. The fleet would sail through the Lycian channel to Physkos, an ancient city on the mainland twenty-two Roman miles away from Rhodes. It would transport the remaining equipment for the guns and engines of war with part of the supplies. When Paleologus Pasha paliologus expeditionis[138] prefectus classem conscendens Antonium[139] perquiri iubet quem paulo ante morte[140] turpiter obiisse comperit. Accersito igitur Demetrio satellitem adhibet.

Tunc passim rumor exiit classem et copiosum exercitum in rhodios parari. Turcus[141] ut hec res nos lateret[142] aditus portus passus[143] custodit: prohibetque ne quis nuncium deferat. Sed non valuit eius astutia[144] magistri solertiam prohibere: qui assidue[145] litteris[146] et nunciis ex turchia[147] apparatum intelligit. Nonnulli quoque ex nunciis in dolo versati sunt. Nam cum exercitus in lycia[148] degeret classem operientes affirmarunt vita excessisse[149] et aliis ex[150] causis exercitum illic adesse. Dum hic rerum status esset summa cura princeps noster: hostium dolos acute prospiciens[151] cuncta disponit. et de presidiis Langonis Castelli sancti petri Feracli Lindi Moneleti[152] ordinat. Que loca defensoribus commeatibus machinis et ceteris bello aptis muniuntur. Omnis plebs cum supellectili rhodum et oppida[153] intrat Ordei quod maturum fuit colligitur quamtocius.[154] Frumentum crudum: nondum enim messis tempus aderat: quod urbem circumdabat: prout cuique[155] facultas fuit populus eradicat: colligit et in domos portat.

Dum hec magno[156] cum tumultu agerentur: vigil qui in[157] specula montis qui ad[158] occidentem vergit sacello sancti Stephani sacri nunciat classem apparere. extensisque velis navigare. Magna quippe populi frequentia ad hoc spectandum concurrit. tota civitate trepidatur. populique clamore cuncta resonant: classis phiscum navigare properat:[159] ut milites qui terrestre iter

finished the preparations and was about to join the fleet, he ordered that Anthony be searched for, only to learn that he had died shamefully a short time before. After summoning Demetrius, the Pasha took him on as a retainer.

Then a rumor spread far and wide that a fleet and a large army was being prepared against the Rhodians. To keep this hidden from us, the Turk guarded the ports, approaches, and harbors, and stopped any messages from being sent.

But his cunning was not sufficient to counter the shrewdness of the master, who was provided with information from Turkey by letters and messengers.[5] Some of the envoys were involved in trickery. They affirmed that the great Turk had died and for that reason the army was in Lycia supporting the fleet and it had also come there for other reasons. This was the state of affairs when our prince, keenly aware of the guile of the enemy, set in order with great care the fortresses of Kos, the castle of St. Peter, Pheraklos, Lindos, and Monelithos. He fortified these sites with defenders, provisions, engines, and certain equipment of war. All the common people of Rhodes entered the castles with all their goods. They collected all the ripe barley. Since harvest time had not yet come, they pulled up by the roots as much as they could of the unripe grain that surrounded the city. They collected it and took it into their houses.

While they were doing this with a great activity, the sentry in the watchtower of the holy chapel of Mount St. Stephen that faced to the west announced the fleet had appeared with unfurled sails. A great number of the people flocked to see this spectacle. The entire city was terrified and resounded with all the shouts of the people. The fleet quickly sailed to Physkos, so that the soldiers who traveled by land fecerant conscendant et rhodiorum freto[160] transito repente velis[161] conversis ad nostra declinat littora.

Appulit[162] itaque ea classis velorum centum decimo kalendas[163] iunii[164] anno incarnationis verbi divini[165] 1480.[166] militeque in terram exposito primum in vertice[167] mentis sancti Stephani. et circa eius montis colles[168] castrametati sunt. machinas quoque et bellica ingenia in littus exonerant eo in loco quern ab ipso monte defluens fons[169] abluit: qui a[170] rhodiis obice collis[171] spectari non potest. His peractis pars classis ad devehendum[172] terrestrem exercitum phiscum navigat. In classis adventu[173] quidam turci[174] equestres pedestresque versus urbis menia audacia quadam freti irruunt. Eruptione autein a nostris facta hostes fugantur: funduntur. quidam quoque ex eis trucidantur. Postea dum nostri comessarentur. altera eruptione facta turci[175] propelluntur: caduntque non nulli. ex nostris vero miles unus periit que incautius manum conserebat. cuius spolia et cadaver nostri sibi vendicant: turci capite[176] absciso illud lancee suffigiunt ad suos quoque cum plausu revertuntur.[177]

Postridie eius diei[178] qua classis appulit: hostis[179] tres ingentes machinas in hortis[180] ecclesie sancti Antonii[181] vicinis arboribus omnium[182] generis fructuum consitis collocat.[183] Turrim quoque sancto Nicolao dicatam in vertice molis sitam could board. After rapidly crossing the strait of Rhodes and setting its sails, it moved towards our shore.

Thus on the tenth of kalends of June in the year of the incarnation of the divine word 1480, a fleet of one hundred sail landed.[6] After the soldiers first disembarked on the headland of Mount Saint Stephen, they laid out a camp around the foothills of the mountain. They unloaded guns and engines of war

in a place on the beach where a spring flowing down the mountain provided a source of water. This site could not be seen from Rhodes since a hill was in the way. After doing this, the fleet sailed away to Physkos to ferry over the land forces.

With the arrival of the fleet, certain Turkish knights and footsoldiers boldly rushed against the city walls. Yet our men sallied forth and chased the enemy away: the enemy were scattered, and some of them were slaughtered. Later, while our men were eating, the Turks launched another raid and were driven back. Several were killed. One of our knights, who incautiously engaged in close combat, perished.[7] Our men recovered his body, clothes, and arms; the Turks fastened his decapitated head on a lance, which they returned to their own lines in the midst of great applause.

On the next day the fleet landed. The enemy set up three large guns in the garden of the church of St. Anthony, situated near the orchard where all types of fruit trees grew. They were attempting to attack the Tower dedicated to St. oppugnare conatur:[184] easque machinas lignearum munitionum propugnaculis operiunt defenduntque. Nostri vero munimentis que repara vocant conspectis: tria tormenta que bombarde vocantur ab hostium dextera[185] in horculo[186] palacii militum averniorum statuunt: eiusque diei diluculo Georgius machinarum egregius[187] artifex de quo habitus est sermo: repente ad fosse ripam que magistri palatium munit[188] visus est: amice omnes salutans clamitansque[189] ut introducaturabrerumignarisvix[190] confoditur.defenditur ab aliis:extemploque[191] ad raagistrum producitur. Vir enim erat corpore procero: forma eleganti: satis eloquentie:[192] magna astutia: cui germania patria est. Rogatus de causa adventus respondit zelo fidei compulsus et publico christiane religionis comodo[193] suasus ad nostros defecisse. Placide excipitur: laudaturque propositum si in eo persistat. De hostis exercitusque habitu dispositione qualitate[194] consultus constanter: prudenter: intrepideque respondit. Inter cetera edocet numerum militum omnis generis centum milia vel circiter adesse: classem earn quam diximus machinas sexdecim[195] ingentes devexisse. quarum longitudinis dimensio palmorum duorum[196] et viginti fertur: que vehementissimo velocissimoque iactu globos saxeos rotunditatis palmorum novem plerosque undecim torquent.

De huius viri defectione varie quidem sententie suboriuntur. Quidam exploratorem affirmant: et fugam commento asservisse ut rhodios fallat. Nonnullorum assertio fuit eum callidum et maleficum virum esse: multaque olim effinxisse. Quibusdam aliis[197] sentientibus:[198] et in bonam partem defectionem interpretantibus: que prudens esset et penitens errati[199] id fecerit: sapideque intelligeret hec rhodiis machinari non posse: ubi tam prudentem principem: et expertissimos milites intelligit[200] degere. Augent suspitiones epistole ex Nicholas located at the head of the mole. They covered and

defended these guns with a wooden screen. However, once our men saw these defenses, which are called ramparts, they set up three guns, which are called bombards, to the enemy's right in the small garden of the palace of the knights of Auvergne.

At dawn of that day, George, the exceptional gun maker who has been discussed before, suddenly appeared at the edge of the ditch that defended the palace of the master. He was greeting and calling out in a friendly manner to all that he should be let in. Some of the men unacquainted with the situation almost ran him through, but he was defended by others, who immediately escorted him to the master. He was a tall man with an elegant physique, sufficient eloquence, great astuteness, who hailed from Germany.

When asked why he had defected to our side, he responded "I am driven by zeal for the Christian faith and I am persuaded by the common good of the Christian religion." He was received calmly and praised for his persistence. When consulted about the enemy army, its condition, deployment, and quality, he answered consistently, wisely, and fearlessly. Among other things, he related the number of Turkish soldiers of all types to be near one hundred thousand or so: the fleet (which we spoke of earlier) had sixteen huge guns that were twenty-two palms long, with an extremely violent and rapid firing action that could discharge round stone shot nine to eleven palms in diameter.

Various opinions arose concerning the defection of this man. Some claimed he was certainly a spy who fabricated this fictitious flight to dupe the Rhodians. Others asserted he was a sly and evil man, and had conceived many of his plans long before this. There were certain other sentiments, and most interpreted the defection in this manner: that he was a wise man, and, repenting of his errors, he had defected. He was too intelligent to think he could deceive the Rhodians; for he knew a wise master and most expert Knights lived there. Letters shot by arrows castris turcorum[201] in civitatem sagittis misse: que Georgiuxn insimulant et ab eo cavendum esse dictitant. Magister ingenio solers et perspicax[202] Georgium[203] arcta custodia servari iubet. sex robustissimis comitibus adhibitis: in his que machinarum[204] iactum et belli[205] ingenia spectant:[206] ipsius arte caute utitur. Omni igitur conatu[207] turci[208] ad expugnationem turris et molis sancti Nicolai incumbunt: si huius[209] potiantur putant urbem in suam potestatem facile venturam. Est enim molis[210] ipsa trecentorum circiter passuum in mare protensa miro artificio[211] ab antiquis manufacta: que suo progressu portum triremibus aptum a parte occidentis efficit. Cuius introitus cautibus concluditur: ut triremis introire vix possit. In molis quidem vertice septentrionem spectante arx de qua sermo est: magnifice nostra etate erecta est: ubi priscis temporibus colossus ille ingens rhodius unum de septem mirabilibus mundi positus erat. Qui post tres et quinquaginta annos quo fusus est terremotu corruit: osque portus rhodii

spectat.

A machinis[212] quoque illic collocatis sublimes quidem[213] turres que portum claudunt valide oppugnari ac dirui: naves quoque ne portum subeant prohiberi haud difficile possunt. Loci igitur et turris opportunitate hostis allectus omni conatu arcem aggreditur:[214] quatit: oppugnat: iactuque trecentorum lapidutn spaericorum[215] diruit earn praesertim[216] partem quae[217] occidentem spectat. Ruina quidem turrim munit. Licet enim suo pondere[218] ictuumque vehementia saxa ingentia[219] ex quibus edificata erat laberentur: into the city from the Turkish camp fed suspicions; they accused George and they said to beware of him. The master, ingenious, clever, and observant, ordered six of the strongest retainers to keep George under guard and to watch him; and, likewise, to observe how he used his skill in regard to the discharge of the guns and engines of war.

At that point all the plans of the Turks relied upon attacking with all their might the tower and mole of St. Nicholas. They thought if they could gain control of it that the city would easily come under their control. This mole, which extended nearly 300 paces into the sea, was built with amazing skill in ancient times. It formed a safe harbor for galleys on its western side. The entrance was narrowed by sharp rocks, so that galleys only entered with difficulty. At the end of the mole, facing north, stood a stronghold of large proportions built in our own times. In olden days, the famous Colossus of Rhodes, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, stood here. Some fifty-three years after it was cast, it was shattered by an earthquake. It overlooked the mouth and the harbor of Rhodes.

Guns set up there could attack and destroy the high towers that defended the harbor; they could also strike and sink ships and, with no difficulty, prevent them from entering the harbor. Therefore, the enemy selected a place convenient to the tower and attacked, shook, and besieged the citadel with all their strength. The enemy destroyed it, especially on the west side, with a barrage of 300 round stone shot. However, the debris strengthened the tower. Indeed, even though the weight of the violent barrage caused the collapse of the heavy stones with which the tower was built, tamen materia calce harena[220] et lapillis immixtis confecta adeo demoliri non potuit quin turris potior pars staret: ex quo facilis ascensus hosti negatur.[221] Terrori fuit tanti edificii lapsus. Multorum enim annorum opus illustre: temporis momento ruit. Preter quoque plurimorum opinionem ingentes et impetuose machine illam arcem lacerant: deturpant: devastant.[222] Cum autem turris[223] labefacta vix tutabilis videretur: statuit magister industria: ingenio: vigilantia: roboreque militum earn arcem tutari: que murorum crassitudine defendi non potuit. Adhibitis viribus summa cura parantur que turri et moli presidio sunt. Milites igitur in primis strenuissimi deliguntur qui locum defendant, vallumque ex

lignis efficitur: quod turrim claudat: fossamque cautibus excissis[224] circumducunt.[225]

Collocatur in turri presidium[226] validum pro loci capacitate.[227] Turris namque iussu magistri:[228] qui assiduo cogitatu tuitioni[229] loci invigilans non formidat cimba vectus diruptam arcem visere: dum machine lapides torquerent calce et lapide oppletur: ut locus vix commilitonum capax reddatur. Constituitur et aliud presidium equestrium et pedestrium in antemurali: quod a turri sancti petri ad inferiorem mandrachii partem protenditur: qui transitum turcis[230] prohibeant. Humile namque mare et vadosum illic transiri potest: ubi et vegetum munitiones parate: et tabule clavorum infixione infeste in profundo fixe sunt: que impedimento hosti[231] vadenti. In vallo autem radicis molis milites electissimi locati sunt qui pugnantibus nostris presidio sint. Ubi magister insignis[232] armis auroque fulgens facinori clarissimo intendebat: Disponuntur ea parte murorum urbis bombarde et tormenta que triremes et turcorum[233] navigia expugnent: perfringantque. Prope quoque cautes eius arcis cimbe combustibilibus opplete[234] stationem habent: que in oppugnatione[235] incendantur: et hostium classi incendium afferant. His rebus nevertheless, the rubble, composed of limestone, sand, and stone, intermixed to such an extent that the tower could not be demolished; and its stronger section, from which an enemy ascent could easily be driven back, stood firm.

The fall of such a mighty building caused extreme terror, for the distinguished work of many years was leveled in a moment. Indeed, it was impossible for many to believe that the massive and violent cannons demolished the site, tearing it down and devastating it. But when the tower appeared destroyed and barely defensible, the master ordered industrious, ingenious, vigilant, and robust knights to guard that position which could not be defended because of the thickness of the walls. Employing all their strength and with the greatest care, they prepared the defense of the tower and the mole. The most vigorous knights were especially selected to defend the place. They constructed a palisade from wooden stakes that shielded the tower and surrounded the trench with sharp stones.

A strong garrison was stationed in the tower in accordance with the size of the place. Likewise, because of the master's order and the garrison's assiduous effort in defending the place, he did not fear for the tower, and unaware of the demolished citadel, he traveled across by boat. While the guns were discharging stone shot, the tower was filled with so much sand and stone that the site was not big enough to accommodate more of our fellow soldiers. To prevent the Turks from crossing, he established another post of knights and infantry in an outer rampart that stretched from the tower of St. Peter to the lower part of the Mandraki. Since the sea was shallow there, full of sandbars, and could be crossed, defenses were energetically prepared at that point.

Boards with nails driven into them were placed in the deep there to hinder the advance of the enemy. Moreover, in the entrenchment, at the base of the mole, elite soldiers were stationed to defend our [other] fighting men. There, the master, glittering in distinguished armor of gold, directed this most glorious deed. On the stretch of the city walls, they set up bombards and guns that assaulted and battered the galleys and ships of the Turks. They anchored ships filled with combustible material near the jagged rocks of the citadel. These would be ignited during the attack to set fire to the enemy ships. Once they magno[236] subtilique ingenio dispositis: fiunt vigilie: prestolatur hostium invasio. Demum exorto lucifero: dum zephiri placide flarent: turcorum[237] triremes a littore cautium mentis sancti Stephani soluunt. superatoque saburre promontorio navigant: eamque turrim propugnant.[238]

Primo congressu antequam in terram descendant ingenti clamore: et typmanorum sono voces edunt: ut terrori multitudo sit. Nostri autem in armis dispositi presto adsunt. Cum enim triremes turrim propugnant:[239] machine saxa iaciunt: presidium quod in turri locatum erat armorum vi: balistis: iactuque lapidum hostem propulsat. Pelluntur turci:[240] fugantur: trucidantur.[241] Ea in pugna quemadmodum postea a perfugis relatum est septingenti turci[242] interiere. multi vulnerati.[243] quidam desiderati.[244] Victoria potitus princeps: insigni equo vectus illustri comitatus phalange:[245] urbem more triumphantis intrat: sacellumque quo imago sacratissime virginis philermi montis miraculis percelebris posita erat visitans gratias agit: et demum ad reficiendos animos militum domum revertitur. Perdita tunc spe arcis molisque potiunde:[246] visoque valido presidio[247] turci[248] grandioribus viribus arcem aggredi: aliaque loca oppugnare: menia[249] dirvere student: ut defensoribus distractis: uno momento molem et loca dirupta invadant: ne vires nostrorum unite essent. et dum diversas partes tutari cogitaremus: negligentius in mole res ageretur.[250] Sequenti igitur nocte:[251] magno clamore virorum onera subeuntium cuncta resonant: carried out these preparations with great subtlety and ingenuity, they posted sentinels to await the enemy invasion. Finally, dawn came. While zephyrs gently blew, the Turk's galleys cautiously set sail from the shore of sharp stones near Mount St. Stephen; and, jettisoning their ballast, they sailed around the promontory and attacked the tower.

At first approach, before landing on the shore, they let out a mighty shout and beat the drums, so that the multitude of our men would be terrified. Our men, however, standing at their weapons, were ready. For when the galleys attacked the tower, their guns discharged stones, but the garrison stationed in the tower repulsed the enemy by force of arms (with crossbows and by a barrage of stones with slings). The Turks were knocked back: they fled: they were slaughtered. Afterwards, deserters related that seven-hundred Turks were killed, many wounded, and a certain number unaccounted for.

After winning this victory, the prince, riding a magnificent horse, and accompanied by an illustrious battalion of his soldiers, entered the city in a customary triumph. And visiting the chapel where the famous image of the most holy Virgin of Mount Philermo was located,[8] a place where many miracles had taken place, he gave thanks: and not until then did he return to his residence to lift the spirits of the soldiers.

The Turks, abandoning hope of gaining control of the fortress and the mole: and, seeing the strength of the garrison, wanted to attack other places and to destroy the walls in order to distract the defenders. Thus at the same instant, they attacked the mole and the other ruined places, so that our forces could not be concentrated. While we attempted to defend the different places, we greatly neglected the state of the mole's defenses. Yet on the following night, everything resounded with the great clatter of our men carrying out their toil, machinas ad menia hebreorum vehunt. Ante hos muros octo ingentes machinas collocant: que munitionibus defense in menia saxa grandia iaciunt. Aliam machinam prope radicem molis que ad septentrionem vergit. in cuius vertice qui damnati sunt: extremo afficiuntur supplicio: ponuntque[252] in turrim verticis molis[253] molendinorum[254] et molendina supra mole edificata globos saxeos torqueat. Hostium proposito agnito[255] magister solita prudentia cuncta dirigens divinis supplicationibus cum populo et commilitonibus innitens: munitiones[256] ad interiora urbis parat. ludeorum edes que in pomerio erecte erant diruuntur: vallum paratur: fossa cavatur: et murus fosse summa arte et diligentia obijcitur.[257] Interdiu[258] noctuque operi intenditur. Non magister: non baiulivi: non priores: non milites: non cives: non negociatores: non matrone: non nupte: non virgines opere vacant. Lapides terram calcem humeris portant. Auro argento supellectili non parcitur: ut publice saluti consulatur. Machine hostium vehementissimo impetu menia quatiunt: et faciem egregiorum lapidum diruunt. Tanta enim erat iactus violentia[259] tormentorum: ut omnibus admirationi fuerit. Nullus quoque[260] rhodi degens ubi ex omni natione latini nominis nonnulli versabantur compertus est: que non affirmaret ullo unquam tempore tales machinas vidisse aut audivisse. Id quoque Georgius[261] perfuga[262] affirmavit: et nusquam terrarum tam grandes inveniri asserit. Dum enim saxa sperica iaciunt[263] in lapidis[264] exitu sonus ingens editur: qui tonitrui instar resonat: fumusque tanquam[265] nubes crassa diuturno tempore in aere vento fertur: quorum sonus plerumque ab oppidanis[266] Castelli rubei auditus est: quod a rhodo centum milibus passuum orientem versus distat. Ipse quoque machine mirabilius quoddam efficiebant. Machinarum posteriora in munitionem que palis terre affixis fabricatur tam grandem impetum reddebant: ut instar motus terre: edificia urbis paululum hoc pulsu moverentur. Spe igitur in[267] menium tuitione perdita. totis viribus as they slowly dragged cannons up to the walls of the Jews. They set up eight huge guns protected by their own

fortifications before these walls, and they discharged large stones against them. Another gun stood near the foot of the mole, facing north towards the ground where those who were condemned suffered the final punishment; and they deployed an additional gun at the head of the mole of the windmills. They discharged stone shot at the tower and the mills built on top of the mole. The master, with his usual prudence, recognized the enemy strategy, and, relying on prayers to the Almighty, along with the aid of the people and fellow soldiers, prepared fortifications for the interior of the city. The Jewish structures built in the *pomerium*[9] were demolished: a rampart was readied: a trench dug out, and a wall was erected with great skill and diligence on the lip of the trench. The work continued day and night. Nobody shirked work; not the master, bailiffs, priors, knights, citizens, merchants, matrons, brides, nor virgins. They carried stones, soil, and lime on their shoulders. Neither gold, nor silver, nor household goods were spared to care for the public safety. The guns of the enemy shook the walls with vehement fury and smashed the elegant stone facing. The violence of the barrage was such that all were astonished by it. None of the inhabitants of Rhodes, and only a few from the Latin nations who lived there, could be found who affirmed they had not at any time seen or heard such great guns. The turncoat, George, agreed, and he claimed that such immense guns had never before existed in the world. Indeed, while they discharged round stones, the guns, with the fire of each shot, emitted sounds that boomed as loud as thunder. The wind bore smoke in the air like thick clouds for a long time, and the sound was heard by many of the inhabitants of the fortress of the Red Castle,[10] which stood one hundred thousand paces[11] to the east of Rhodes. These guns caused certain amazing results. Around the rear of these guns, a fortification was made by placing stakes atop earth. The guns recoiled with such great force that, as in an earthquake, the buildings of the city swayed slightly with this concussion.

Having lost hope of guarding the walls, all the men established a defense vallo fossa et munitionibus interioribus tutamen constituimus. Nec ea[268] hosti sufficiunt. Aggreditur quippe alio terrore vexare. Collocat enim omni ex parte tormenta et mortaria que ex transverso edificia urbis verberant: dirvant: mortalesque conterant. Hec tormenta mortaria dicta interdiu noctuque saxa in aera[269] sublime iaciunt. Erat quidem[270] populo ingenti terrori: qui in aere tarn grandes globos saxeos conspiciebat. Non enim parvam anxietatem id nostris incussit. Plus tarnen noctu quem interdiu terroris attulit. Nullus in privatis domibus tutus videbatur. Quilibet latebras queritabat. Verum ei vulneri mens humana medetur. lussu magistri mulieres infantes et ornnis imbecillis etas in pomerio collocatur: et crassa trabe protegitur. Ea namque ingenia raro illic decidunt. Ad urbis quippe frequentiora loca diriguntur: ut mortales conterant: domosque quatiant. Iuvenes vero et robusti qui interdiu saxa suspiciebant:

tormenta facile vitabant. Noctu autem quidam caveas subterraneas: quidam valuas crassissimas: quidam fornices et sacras edes querentes sub eis trepidum somnum carpebant. Hoc quoque miraculo fuit nutuque dei factum esse haud aliter creditur: qui publicis supplicationibus assidue ecclesiis et altaribus exorabatur: ut cum plura saxa machine torquerent: pauci tamen mortales et quedam bruta eorum iactu interierunt que potius domorum ruina iactu lapidis collapsarum quam saxei globi pondere attrita sunt. Hostes quoque id parum arbitrati: duas machinas ex grandioribus in eminentiori loco qui ad hesperum vergit: ex quo urbs prospicitur collocant: que assidue in urbem et loca edificiis frequentiora saxa torquent. Nec ipse machine licet terrori essent damnum insigne ediderunt: nec mortales occiderunt: prepedite non ambigo orationibus que deo: eius[271] genitrici intemerate:[272] et beato Iohanni baptiste fiebant.

Bassa[273] vero principis[274] nostri vigilantiam et ingenium conatibus suis inficere coniectans Magistrum dolo interficere aggressus est submissis quibusdam qui defectionis pretextu eum adorirentur. Quo evecto arbitra turrerum facile[275] potiturum. Hoc quidem nephandum facinus perfuga quidam veneno perficere statuit comite accito qui postridie cum toxico urbem intraret. His perfugis Bassa[276] grandia pollicetur facinis[277] perficiant. Qui prior ingressus est examini prudentum ut ceteri subiicitur:[278] contrariis sermonibus deprehenditur: line inside them, with a rampart, ditches, and fortifications. This, however, was not enough to hold the enemy, who began to harass the city with another form of terror. The Turks set up guns and mortars that battered, demolished, and pulverized the buildings of the city and its inhabitants from an oblique angle. A gun, called a mortar, fired stones high in the air day and night. This thoroughly terrified the population, who looked up to see such great stone shot in the sky, and indeed caused us great anxiety. It created more terror at night than during the day. No one seemed safe, even in his own house. Everyone would look for any hiding place. But, in truth, the human mind healed this wound. The master ordered women, children, and all those of advanced age to gather in the *pomerium*, protected by very thick wooden beams, because the gun fire rarely fell there. Instead it was aimed at the more crowded places of the city, in order to annihilate people and demolish their houses. During the day, the young and the fit who saw the stones could easily avoid the bombardment. At night, however, people sought safety in underground caves, behind barricades, or in the vaults of churches and shrines, there snatching fitful sleep. It was a miracle by the will of God and a fact hardly to be believed: that because of the public prayers constantly offered in churches and at altars, only a few people and some of their animals were killed during this barrage, the majority from the falling stones of ruined buildings weakened by the weight of stone shot, even though the guns fired many shots. The enemy, thinking the effect too small, positioned two guns on higher

ground to the west where they could overlook the city. They continuously fired stones into the crowded buildings of the city. Neither of these guns caused terror; they did not damage significant buildings, nor kill people. I do not doubt that this was done through the offering of prayers to God, his undefiled son, and blessed John the Baptist.

Indeed, the Pasha, observing our prince's vigilance and talent in carrying out his plans, sent several men posing as deserters to kill the master by trickery, a thing he believed could be easily done. He decided a certain man should carry out this nefarious deed with poison and summoned a companion to enter the city with the poison on the next day. The Pasha promised these deserters great rewards to carry out these evil deeds. The first man who entered the city was subjected to a thorough search (as were the other deserters); their contradictory statements were compared crimenque ultro pandit. Monetque ut caveat princeps: quia plurime in eum sunt parate insidie. Damnatus perfuga: securique percussus interiit. Cum vero sceleris comes venenum gestans ad nos transiret: a quibusdam vix confoditur. Vnde[279] perterritus ad turcos[280] revertitur. Dum hostis italie[281] stationis menia oppugnat: nocte ad ripam fosse munitionem ac repara[282] diligentius erigit. hostilibus munimentis fosse adhibitis conspectis:[283] de his dirimendis consilium agitur. Deliguntur fortissimi iuvenes quinquaginta: quibus miles ordinis preficitur egregius. Eruptione itaque[284] facta: per fossas occulto nostri vadunt. Vbi ad partem munitioni obiectam ventum est: scalis erectis ripam fosse extemplo[285] conscendunt. sagittis: gladiis et saxis hostes persequuntur fugant trucidant.[286] Ea in pugna turci[287] decern gladio[288] cesi sunt. munitio fracta.[289] Egregii iuvenes victoria potiti: quatuor capitibus hastis affix is urbem ovantes intrant: oppidanorurn[290] ingenti plausu excipiuntur. Magister victores[291] muneribus donat: ad incitandum iuvenum animos et alio ad queque[292] egregie obeunda alliciendos. Paucis diebus interiectis:[293] turci[294] turris potiunde desiderio compulsi: superiorique repulsa[295] accensi: arcem sancti Nicolai grandiori conatu arte et ingenio aggrediuntur: munimenta quoque et propugnacula iactu machinarum demoliuntur. Quod proteritur: summa diligentia restituitur. Parant ad conflictum ligneum pontem qui ex saccello sancti Antonii turcis[296] in molem transitum prebeat. Pons autem ex lignis variis vegetibus connexis: quibus asseres clavis confixe erant construitur. Latitudo sex militum equo gradu fronteque[297] dimicantium capax fuit. Longitudo vero tanta erat que littus[298] and the full extent of the crime was revealed. And he [the first deserter] warned that the prince should take care, since many ambushes were being prepared against him. The deserter was condemned and was executed with an axe blow. When his partner in crime carrying the poison was crossing over to us, he was almost run all the way through by some of our men. Frightened, he returned to the Turks.

While attacking the wall of the Italian Station[12] during the night, the enemy diligently threw up a defensive wall and rampart on the bank of the ditch. Our men saw the enemy fortifying the ditch and conceived a plan to put a stop to these fortifications. Fifty strong young men were chosen; a knight of the order was put in charge of them. Sallying out, our men secretly advanced through the trenches. When they came to the exposed part of the fortifications, they erected ladders and immediately climbed up on to the bank of the ditch. They slaughtered the enemy, putting them to flight with arrows, swords, and stones. In this skirmish they killed ten Turks with swords and then broke through the ramparts. These exceptional youths won victory: they carried the heads of four captives affixed on their spears and returned to the city joyfully; the people of the city welcomed them with massive applause. The master gave the victors presents to inspire them and to encourage others to such exceptional feats.

A few days later, the Turks, driven by desire to capture the tower and furious at their earlier defeat, attacked the fortifications of St. Nicholas with renewed effort, deceit, and energy. The barrage of the guns demolished the muniments and ramparts. This caused great fear, but it was resisted with the greatest diligence. Our men prepared to attack the wooden bridge that gave the Turks access from the chapel of St. Anthony to the mole. The bridge was constructed from different wooden wine casks that were lashed together, and to which planks were affixed with pins. It was wide enough for six knights fully equipped for battle to cross riding abreast. It was long enough to touch the shore utrumque contingeret. Pontem in mare turci[299] ad ripam molis traducere ingenio proponunt. Anchoram enim rudenti alligatam quo fune pons religatus erat: circa molern hostes in mare devehunt:[300] ut tracto fune anchoraque mordaci dente renitente pons in ulteriorem molis[301] ripam natare compellatur. A nostris arte cognita: nauta quidam rerum maritimarum non ignarus noctu undis se obruit. anchoram soluit fune cautibus remissius alligato qui parva vi dissolvatur. Egregium facinus ad Magistrum detulit: qui aureo munere donatus gaudens comitum piausu ad stationem molis revertitur. Turci[302] comperto dolo cum primum pontis devectionem[303] experiuntur: decepti statuunt scaftarum[304] remigio pontem ad ripam transvehere. Hostis quoque tante rei intentus: ad oppugnationem triremes triginta parat[305] bene quidem munitas et ad conflictum ornatas.[306] Preter has quoque adiiciunt nonnulla oneraria navigia parandarias vulgo dictas: ex quibus quedam[307] machinis et saxeis globis tormentis adaptatis onuste fuere: ut si turris victoria potirentur repente ex eo loco portum turres meniaque dirverent prosternerent: demolirentur.[308] Nec pretermittiunt[309] celeriores cimbas[310] disponereque turcorum[311] strenuissimos quosque admolem devehant: qui primi nostros aggrediantur: et cum eis manus conserant: quibus preliantibus ceteri ex ponte et triremibus in molem descendant. Imponuntque triremibus et parandariis[312]

non parvas machinas quibus nostros prosternere possint. Grandes quoque machine que turrim dirverant[313] ad tempus ineundi conflictus officio fungantur. Princeps vero noster rerum summe invigilans subtilique ingenio et solerti mente cuncta diiudicans fretus strenuissimi cuiusque commilitonis sententia qui ex occidentali natione aderat.[314] Nec defuerunt plerique indigene: grecique: ingenio manuque prompti: summa cura arcis defensioni consulit. Suspicati enim post primam pugnam quod contigit: turris et moles propugnaculis: fossa valioque abundantius munitur: accersitis operariis on both sides. The Turks placed the bridge in the sea to cross to the bank of the mole using a trick. They attached a thick cable to the bridge, connecting the other end of it to an anchor. The enemy moved the bridge into the sea near the mole, so that it would be compelled to float to the further bank of the mole, while snagging its cable and anchor on the jagged rocks.

When our men learned of this scheme, a certain sailor, experienced in maritime matters, swam at night under the water, and removed the cable from the anchor, tying it to the jagged boulders so that a slight force would loosen it. The master, learning of this outstanding feat, rewarded him with gold. Rejoicing, the sailor returned to his station on the mole enjoying the applause of his comrades.

The Turks discovered this trick when they first attempted to tow the bridge. Having already been deceived, they attempted to tow the bridge to the shore with small boats. The enemy, intending to accomplish this great undertaking, fitted out thirty galleys, well armed and equipped for combat. In addition they added cargo ships commonly called *parandarias*. On these vessels they loaded guns and stone shot adapted for artillery: so that if they should capture a tower, they could immediately use it to destroy, demolish, and reduce the towers and walls of the port to rubble. Nor did they neglect faster skiffs to convey to the mole the strongest of the Turks, who were the first to attack us and join in hand-to-hand combat. During the struggle, certain troops from the bridge, galleys, and cargo ships were able to disembark and set up large cannons with which they could slaughter our men. These large guns that had destroyed the tower at the beginning of the conflict again performed their duty.

But our leader, paying attention to these crucial matters and making all decisions with consummate skill and a clever mind, relied on the advice of all the most vigorous soldiers who had come from western nations. Nor were most of the native troops lacking, while the Greeks, with ingenuity and promptness, gave advice with greatest care about the defense of the stronghold. For they had understood what had happened after the first battle, and so the tower and mole was very abundantly fortified with outworks of ditch and palisade. Almost one thousand men fere mille qui interdiu noctuque

cautibus excissis.[315] rupibusque demolitis quod expetitur conficiunt: nec impensarum[316] sarcinis parcitur.[317] Presidia quoque in turris ruina collocantur. Pariter alia[318] presidia in radice molis disponuntur: que nostris casu urgente opitulentur Rebus sic ad pugnam paratis subdiatavere nostri:[319] ne turci[320] duobus locis urbern eodem momento aggrederentur: ut vires partirentur et quod cupiunt facilius confidant. Cui[321] incomoditati et periculo Magistri prudentia[322] providet. Presidia quippe[323] robustissimoruin in menibus[324] iudeorum ac italie stationis que iam iactu machinarum partim demolita erant statuit: qui tuitioni intendant: nec suo iniussu[325] discedant. Non est qui sane rem diiudicaret[326] ac sentiret nostram salutem in turris tuitione collocatam esse. Quo fit ut uno ore omnes tamque fidei veri athlete[327] eius tuitioni consulerent: et ut commune[328] christianorum domicilium[329] servarent. In quo plurimorum equitum hierosolymorum[330] ac nobilium infimorumque: latinorum pariter grecorum rhodiorumque virtus et animositas emicuit: qui concordi audacia et animositate asylum[331] et tutissimum christianorum refugium rhodiam urbem tutantur. Duo mercenarii[332] iuvenes[333] qui turris presidio ascripti sunt comprehenduntur arma in pelagus deiecisse: qui facinore perpetrato ad turcum deficere proponunt. Crimine damnati: capitis supplicio[334] afficiuntur. Ad turris demum oppugnationem turci tertiodecimo kalendas[335] iulii intempesta nocte terramarique summo silentio accedunt. Ubi veropugnam inire conantur: grandi cum clamore et tympanorurn[336] sono invadunt. Nostri quidem arrectis auribus day and night broke up rocks and demolished boulders. They accomplished what was required and spared no expense on the material. They stationed a troop in the ruined tower; likewise, they posted another at the foot of the mole that could assist our men in an emergency. Indeed, after these preparations for battle were made, our men were deployed so that the Turks could not attack two places in the city at the same time, so that our forces could be divided and easily accomplish what they wanted.

The master's intelligence overcame the disadvantage and danger. He placed garrisons of very strong men on the walls of the Jews and also on the Station of Italy, which already had been partially demolished by gun fire. The troops stationed there for defense could not retreat without his orders. He realized that our safety relied on the defense of the tower, and he held this opinion. It happened that these men, with one voice and with the true faith of martyrs, took the defense upon themselves in order to save the common home of Christendom. In this action, the courage and the spirit of the Knights of Jerusalem, of the nobles, and of both the lesser Latins and Greeks of Rhodes shone forth. With braveness, and spirit of unity, they guarded the city of Rhodes as the refuge and protection of Christians.

Two young mercenaries who were assigned to the garrison of the tower, having been overcome with fear, decided to throw down their weapons into

the sea; after committing this shameful act, they tried to defect to the Turks. Condemned for this crime, their heads were cut off.

On the stormy night of the twenty-third of the Kalends of July (June 16), the Turks in the greatest silence attacked the tower by land and by sea. When they were ready to begin the battle, however, they attacked amidst loud shouts and sounds of drums. Our men, straining their ears, hostium impetum comperientes: ubi eos adesse comperiunt: gladios stringunt: balistis et tormentorum iactu hostes lacessunt deturbantque. Hostium triremes ac ciinbe[337] littoribus adherent. Pons quoque traducitur: quo conscenso hostes transeunt. Nostre quidem machine in muris[338] collocate globos saxeos torquent Pons natans frangitur: turci[339] merguntur: quatuor quoque triremes et navigia tormentis onusta iactu machinarum prosternuntur: et undis obruuntur. Turci[340] frequentes qui ex cimbis[341] et triremibus in molem descenderant: a nostris ceduntur trucidanturque. Ignis[342] etiam in classem solutis lintribus immittitur. Nec turci[343] impigri bombardis respondent: ignes iaciunt: sagittas impetuosissimas ex balistis et cathapultis[344] torquent. Magna vi in obscuro: nisi dum[345] ignes iaculari[346] lucem plerumque preberent. Acriter pugnatur et media nocte usque ad horam decimam diei sequentis durans pugna:[347] propulsatisque hostibus victisque[348] dirimitur. Vidisses toto triduo hostium cadavera littore iacentia: auro argento insignique veste fulgentia et complura mari fluctuantia que pelagi estus ut natura solet in superficie ferebat: quorum spoliis complures potiti sunt: et ex his non parum comodi vendicant.[349] Insignis quidem hec pugna fuit morte clarorum virorum qui turcis[350] preerant: quorum interims merorem[351] et luctum hosti attulit presertim generi[352] turci[353] viri quidem[354] strenuissimi a turcoque[355] dilecti mors[356] magno fuit merori. Cuius cadaver post triduum mari ebuliente in molis littus devectum reperitur: eiusque spoliis quidam ex nostris potitur. listened for the enemy attack; when they knew them to be nearby, they drew swords and drove back the enemy's challenge with crossbows and the firing of guns, so their galleys and skiffs could not land on shore.

The bridge was hauled across so the enemy could go over. Then our guns on the wall began firing stone balls. They broke up the floating bridge: the Turks were plunged [into the sea]; the heavy artillery fire shattered four of the galleys and transports, and they sank under the waves. The large number of Turks who had landed on the mole from the skiffs and galleys were cut to pieces and slaughtered by our men. Burning boats were allowed to float into the enemy fleet. Nevertheless, the diligent Turks returned fire with their bombards; they spread flames and shot streams of arrows from their crossbows and catapults.

Both sides struggled forcefully in the dark, except when the artillery fire provided some light. The fighting continued bitterly from midnight until ten in

the morning. The battle was broken off after the enemy forces were driven back and defeated. For three full days, one could see sodden enemy corpses (their distinguished clothing gleaming with gold and silver) thrown up all along the beach and floating in the sea. The natural action of the tides carried them along the surface of the sea. Many of our men took possession of their spoils, and from this plunder they gained great profit.

This battle was noteworthy; important leaders of the Turks were killed, and their death caused the enemy grief and mourning. This was especially so with the death of the son-in-law of the Great Turk (a most brave man esteemed by the Turks), which greatly grieved the enemy.[13] His body was discovered on the shore of the mole after floating in the sea for three days, and some among us claimed his possessions as spoils. Perfuge qui post prelium ad nostras defecerunt edocent exercitum magnam cladem accepisse: turcosque[357] ea in pugna duo milia quingenti[358] cecidisse: ex eoque Bassam[359] ingentem merorem concepisse: qui tres dies intra papiliones: frequentia commilitonum prohibita se continuit: et stragem turco[360] celerius nunciat.[361] eo quoque magis mens[362] eius roditur que post tantam ruinam turri illatam arce potiri non potuerit: Et que tantam in eius oppugnatione ignominiam acceperit: existimans turcensem[363] numerosum exercitum invalidum esse: qui turrim diruptam expugnare non valverit.

Cum autem turci spem turris[364] expugnande perdidissent conatum: studium: industriam omnesque vires ad civitatem omni ex parte oppugnandam convertunt:[365] Et licet ad menia iudeorum: ac italie stationis animuin potissime convertant: non cessant tamen circumquaque muros verberare ac demoliri. Hostis ceptum opus continuat: assiduoque conatu aggreditur propositum conficere. Excogitant itaque turci urbem[366] ingenio occulto[367] propinquare: fossas labyrinthi[368] persimiles effodiunt: quas lignis arborum ramusculis contextis edificant terraque operiunt: ut latenter ad fossas urbis accedant. Propugnacula quoque multis in locis cratibus de viminibus contextis edificant: ex quibus assiduo[369] sagittant. colubrinis quoque ac serpentinis nostros deturbant: fatigant. Pensitant quoque eis conducere[370] et aliquam partem fosse que menibus adiacet opplere. Opera itaque ab hoste adhibita lapides congerere non cessant: et occulto[371] in fossam iaciunt. Operis assiduitate pars fosse oppletur: antemurali quoque equatur. ex quo et murorum ruina in dorsi formam redacta: facillimus conscensus in menia efficitur. Precellentissimus princeps noster[372] Rhodiorum magister his conspectis divino quodam ingenio agendis incumbens: nil pretermittere decrevit quod saluti urbis conducere videatur. Maturitateque

Deserters who defected to our side after the battle informed us that the Turkish army suffered a great slaughter and that 2,500 men had been killed in the battle. Because of this, the Pasha was absorbed by monstrous grief. For

three days he remained inside his tent, avoiding contact with his fellow knights. Very shortly after this, he told the Great Turk of the massacre. It also preyed on his mind that after such devastation of the tower they were not able to capture the fortress; and that his attacks met with shame. He then concluded that the huge Turkish army, which had not been able to overrun a ruined tower, was worthless. Since the Turks had lost all hope of storming the tower, they directed all of their efforts, planning, energy and strength to overrunning the city from all sides. Although they directed their forces against the walls of the Jews and the Station of Italy, they did not stop pulverizing and demolishing all the surrounding walls. The enemy continued the work they had begun, and with the greatest effort tried to bring it to completion.

Therefore the Turks devised a plan for secretly approaching the city. They dug a labyrinth of ditches built up with logs and branches woven together and covered with earth so that they could approach the city secretly through the ditches. They built ramparts and in many places they erected hurdles tied together with osiers. From behind these they continuously shot arrows and discharged coleuvrines and serpentines, which annoyed and disturbed our men. They also thought about what to bring with them to fill up that part of the ditch that lay adjacent to the city walls. Thus, working feverishly, the enemy never stopped gathering stones and secretly throwing them into the ditch. By working continuously, they filled in part of the ditch until the level of their rampart was the same as that of the ruined wall. This made crossing over the walls very easy.

Our most distinguished prince, the master of Rhodes, understanding the crisis and acting by divine inspiration, while neglecting nothing, decreed what seemed good for bringing about the safety of the city. And employing his ac solita modestia utens militibus ad contionem vocatis conatus et discrimina graviter ac[373] prudenter explicat. Adherebat enim lateri nobilissimus eius frater excellens miles Antonius[374] daubusson dominus de montelio ad vicecomitem: vir quidem consilio et armis clarus: qui paulo ante ex galliis robustis comitatus viris in orientem[375] sancti sepulchri visitandi gratia: cupiens summopere[376] tam glorioso certamini interesse transfretarat. Is enim a fratre patrum decreto ob fidei integritatem: agendorum experientiam artisque militaris disciplinam commilitonum dux et urbis capitaneus designatus magnanimi et prudentis capitanei munia obiit:[377] et rerum sumrne consulit. Aderant non pauci equites hierosolymorum:[378] precellentes baiulivi: priores senatorii ordinis preceptores et fratres: nobilibus familiis in occidentali plaga nati. Affuerunt negociatores prudentia[379] pollentes: ac rhodii cives: greci quoque ingenio[380] prediti: qui unanimi consensu de tutanda urbe consultant: Excelluit[381] profecto plurimorum cuiusque generis astantium probitas: generositas: virtus ac magnanimitas: quorum sententiis discussis principis nostri solertia quod

optimum diiudicatum est elegit. Nostri vero cuiusdam experti suasu machinam versatilem[382] quod tribuccum[383] vocant ingentia saxa in munitiones et hostium fossas torquens erigere statuunt. Edificatur que[384] celeriter machina periti viri sententia: nautarumque et architectorum opera. Que ubi erecta est: vir peritus gravia saxa in hostes iacit: multosque conterit: munimenta diruit: damnaque intulit non parvipendenda. Excogitatum quoque est[385] earn partem fossae quae lapidibus a turcis oppleta erat evacuare. Sed cum id palam effici non posset cuniculo in pomerio effosso exitum sub lapidibus nostri habent. et clam lapides in urbem comportant. Sentiunt profecto turci qui fosse propinqui erant lapidum congeriem minui: et ascensus opportunitatem adimi: nisi quantocius quod cupiunt efficiant.

Atroci enim murorum ruina conspecta statuitur munitionibus inniti[386] que impetum machinarum sustineant. Murorum igitur lapsui munimenta et repara customary maturity and modesty, he summoned the soldiers to an assembly, where he seriously and prudently explained the salient points of his plan. Moreover, his most noble brother, the excellent knight, Anthony d'Aubusson, lord of Monthélie, stood at his side.[14] A man famous for arms and counsel, he had shortly before this come east from Gaul with a company of brave men. Hoping to visit the Holy Sepulcher, he changed his destination, desiring very much to be involved in this glorious struggle.

The master designated his older brother leader of the soldiers and captain of the city on account of the fullness of his faith, his experience, and his training in military matters. Anthony carried out his duties as captain in a generous and commonsense way, while serving as advisor for the most important matters.

Many Knights of Jerusalem, including distinguished bailiffs, priors, senators[15] of the order, preceptors, and brothers born in the west of noble families were present. Also present were merchants, influential because of their experience, and citizens of Rhodes, Greeks endowed with great intelligence, who with unanimous consent pondered about saving the city. The astuteness, probity, generosity, courage, and selflessness of so many men of this type in carrying out their duties was exemplary, and our ingenious prince weighed their advice and selected the best of it.

Indeed, some of our men, experts in siegecraft, decided to build a versatile machine called a trebuchet to hurl huge rocks into the fortifications and into the ditches of the enemy.[16] Sailors and workers rapidly built this machine through the knowledge of a skilled man.[17] When it was built, the skilled man hurled heavy stones against the enemy, killing many, destroying fortifications, and causing immense damage. Then our men began to consider how to dig out the part of the ditch that the Turks filled up with stones. But since it was not possible to clear it openly, our men excavated an underground passage going

from beneath the stones to the open space behind the walls. They secretly carried the rocks into the city. The Turks noticed that the mass of stones in the ditch had shrunk, and, because of this, their opportunity to cross over the wall was disappearing, unless they could put their own scheme into action very rapidly.

Thus, considering the terrible ruin of the walls, it was decided to construct fortifications that could withstand the force of the guns. Therefore, our men constructed fortifications and redoubts nostri obiiciunt: que in hunc facta sunt modurn. Murus crassitudinis palmorum duorum in pomerio ex opposito menium ducitur: palique ex robustissimo ligno terre infiguntur: glis[387] ramusculis fruticibus[388] quoque intermixtis intus ponitur: assiduoque attritu infusa aqua firmatur: densaturque. Provident insuper ingeniis hostes in ipso congressu propellere et propulsare. Ignes itaque artificiosos[389] parant variis modis reconditos cadis pice sulphure: combustibilique materia repletis: ac sacculis: laminis ferreis: pulvereque machinarum refertis:[390] que ingenia exitio hosti futura sint. Ingens preterea cylindrorum copia affertur: que in hostes ruant: eosque proterant. Varia quoque propugnaculorum forma editur: que turcis[391] impedimento nostris sint adiumento. Delectabant conspicientes virorum ingenia: qui[392] remedia excogitabant:[393] ac plaudebant.[394] Adducitur Georgius[395] proditor[396] forti comitatus caterua ad custodiam data. Consultus[397] de his que tuitioni futura sint remissius: tardiusque respondet: nec de se experimentum ab eo expectatum prebet quemadmodum pollicitus[398] erat. Sperabat quippe vir iniquus et callidus videns murorum iacturam et facilem ascensum per ruinam: civitatem in hostium potestatem futuram. Quedam tamen protulit: ut eius astutiam[399] occultaret. Suadet machinam parari que in machinas hostis[400] iaciat. Quod ut factum est: turcus[401] machine ictus ex adverso dirigit: murumque non parum ledit. Dum hec agerentur epistole ex castris in urbem sagittis diriguntur: que Georgium insimulant. Nec Georgius[402] licet urbis discrimen videret verbis procacibus se abstinet. Que ut ad noticiam deveniunt vehemens suspitio in eum[403] oritur. Quibus ex causis vinculis et carcere arcetur: deputanturque qui virum examinent: et causas defectionis perquirant. Examinatus contradictoriis ac coniecturis sufficientibus convictus

to fill the breaches in the walls; these were made in the following way: they set up walls two palms thick in the open space opposite the city walls. A palisade made from the strongest wood was driven into the earth, and intermixed with branches and limbs from fruit trees. They carefully strengthened its weak points by soaking it with water, and it swelled up. Atop the wall, they set up engines to beat back and to drive off the enemy in this combat. They also made various types of incendiary devices in urns filled with pitch, sulfur, and combustible material; they also produced little sacks stuffed full of iron pellets and gunpowder. These devices would cause great damage to the enemy when

fired by guns. They prepared a huge number of barrels that they hurled down at the enemy and crushed them. They also erected various forms of ramparts which hindered the Turks while helping our men, who, seeing the genius of their fellows who devised these remedies, were delighted and applauded them.

George, the traitor, was brought out with a troop of strong knights to guard him. When they asked his advice about the best way to defend the city, he answered very slowly, not displaying the expertise that his experience promised up to this point. Indeed, the evil and clever man, seeing the breaches in the walls and the ease in climbing over them, hoped the city would soon be under enemy control. He nevertheless took certain actions to conceal his astuteness. He suggested the placement of a gun that would fire into the enemy artillery. It was done, but the Turks aimed the discharge of their guns back towards ours, and this destroyed much of the wall. While this was happening, letters accusing George were shot on arrows from the camp into the city. Even though he foresaw the destruction of the city, George did not refrain from giving bad advice. As this became known, a strong suspicion arose concerning him. For this reason, he was shut up in chains and imprisoned. Those who were appointed to interrogate him inquired into the reasons for his defection. Under interrogation, and convicted by enough contradictions and inferences, torquetur. In tormento et extra rogatus ultro fatetur iussu turcorum[404] tyranni[405] ad rhodios defecisse: ut urbem si posset proderet: quemadmodum plura oppida[406] prodidit.[407] Sin minus rhodi[408] persinistre[409] versaretur cuncta diligentius acutiusque perquireret et specularetur. Mores quoque status et conditiones[410] incolarum et religionis intelligeret: ac demum si classis non vinceret ad turcum[411] reverteretur: docturus[412] que ad urbis expugnationem conducerent. Proponebat namque turcus[413] hanc urbem in suam ditionem redigere. Quod ut conficeret: multis pollicitationibus ac pluribus donis allectus Georgius[414] extitit. Crimine[415] convictus supplicio[416] capitis damnatur: et in propatulo spectante populo fune furce religato Georgius suffocatur. Ut animam exalavit populus cum[417] plausu ad privatas stationes revertitur: letus[418] et gaudens de nece proditoris christiane religionis: qui tot animas perdere voluit: et ad iugulationem et fidei orthodoxe abnegationem tot preclaros viros: castissimasque matronas: sacrasq6ue virgines et plebem christianam perducere[419] studuit. Luit tandem penas scleri debitas vir perfidus.

Vigilans et semper aliquid cogitans[420] turcensis[421] classis prefectus Bassa:[422] alteras litteras in urbem iacere studet: que grecos indigenas et cives latinos ad deditionem hortantur: vita et supellectili salva promissa multamque immunitatem pollicetur.[423] Solum urbis ditionem expostulat: et interitum militum ac pernitiem[424] religionis hierosolymorum[425] affectat. Si secus rebus suis consulant: ad unum omnes interituros affirmat. Putavit vir nepharius

populum infidum invenire: et qui metu terreretur vel muneribus alliceretur. Sed he was subjected to torture. During and after torture, he willingly confessed that he had defected to Rhodes by the order of the tyrant of the Turks, so that he might betray the city, just as he had done to so many fortified sites that already had been lost. With great care and cunning, he was to reconnoiter and find out everything the Rhodians were doing. Moreover, he was to learn of the morale, state, and condition of the inhabitants and of the clergy. Finally, if the Turkish fleet should not win, he was to return to them and reveal what they should do to take the city by storm. Indeed, the Turk planned to put the city under George's authority. So that he would do all these things, George was enticed with many promises and numerous gifts.

Convicted of his crimes, he was condemned to death. In a public place, on the gallows of the Order, George was hanged in front of all the people. As he gave up the ghost, the people, with applause, returned to their individual posts, happy and rejoicing at the death of this traitor to the Christian religion, who wished to destroy so many souls, and desired to lead into servitude, deny, and destroy the orthodox faith of so many distinguished men, extremely chaste matrons, holy virgins, and ordinary Christians. At last, the perfidious man paid the penalty and atoned for his crime.

Always watching and considering all options, the Pasha, leader of the Turkish army, took pains to shoot other letters into the city that urged the native Greeks and Latin citizens to surrender; they also promised life, possessions, safe conduct, and immunity. He only demanded the surrender of the city, the destruction of the Knights, and the ruin of the Order. If they should refuse these demands, he swore that every one of them would die. This devilish creature thought he had come upon a faithless people, whom he could terrorize with fear or entice with presents. But reperit orthodoxe fidei plebem devotam: ac ordini hierosolymorum[426] fidam[427] consilioque et armis mutua equitum et latinorum nostrorum conversatione expertam. Ea igitur in vanum[428] tcntante:[29] alio utitur commento.[430] Mittit ad ecclesiam beate marie virginis helemonitre[431] greculum qui dudum ad turcos[432] defecerat: qui vigiles alloquens ait: Bassam[433] oratorem ad principem nostrum velle destinare dummodo tutus aditus pateat. Respondetur ut illic ad ripam fosse nuncium mittat: aderitque in bolevardo[434] qui nomine Magistri respondeat. Affuit postridie Basse[435] orator qui nostris prius salutatis ait: prefectum classis se non parum inimo3" vehementer admirari que tarn potenti principi restitere audeamus: qui duo imperia: tot regna: tot urbes: tot provincias: totque potentatus subiugavit. Quare suadet ut nostre urbi et agris indoleamus[43] 7nec patiamur'[48] tarmcrudele facinus perpetrari: nec urbem diripi: et ad iugulationem viros: et muiieres ad raptum et ignominiam duci. Bellum an pax prestiterit dicamus. Pollicetur quippe brevi forma et compendio pacem si

libuerit se prestiturum: et nos possessores urbis et agrorum permansuros. Aliter minas addens promittit prope diem civitatem in suam potestatem transituram direptionique prebituram: et omne genus crudelitatis executurum. Qui principis nostri vice aderat edoctus respondet. Non possumus satis non admirari:[439] vos qui cum classe et impetuosis machinis castrorumque copia urbem nostram circumdatis nos ad pacem hortari: cum id a militantium officio alienum videatur. Verum figmento agere videmini: ut animos tentetis,[440] Sciatis nec pollicitationes[441] nec munera vestra nos movere: aut ad aliquid indecens conficiendum allicere.[1442]Nec profecto mine vestre nos terrent. Sumus enim unanimes: nec discrimen est inter latinum et grecum. [443]Christum enim colimus he discovered the devotion of the common people to the true faith, and their loyalty and counsel to the Order of Jerusalem; who by mutual exchange were experienced with the practice of arms, horsemanship and used to our Latin speech. Therefore, considering this strategy useless, the Pasha tried another plan.

The Pasha sent a Greek, who had recently defected to the Turks, to the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary Misericordia. He told the sentries, "The Pasha wants to send an ambassador to our prince, provided that he should allow him safe passage." He was answered that the Pasha should send a messenger to the edge of the ditch there. The person who would answer in the name of the master would come forward in the boulevard.

The next day the Pasha's ambassador appeared and before exchanging greetings with ours, said, "The commander of the fleet is greatly amazed that you should dare to keep offering resistance to such a powerful prince who has subjugated two empires, so many realms, so many cities, so many provinces, and so many powers." And for that reason he advised that we should take pity on city and territory, that we should not permit such cruel crimes to be carried out nor our city to be plundered, the men enslaved, and the women led off to rape and dishonor. He would offer war or peace, and we were to decide. He promised in a formal brief that if he agreed to offer peace we would retain possession of the city and its territory. Otherwise, with his mines extending ever farther under the city, he guaranteed that it would fall to his control within a day. He would then allow it to be plundered with all manner of cruelty unleashed against it.

A learned man who represented our prince answered:[18] "We will never cease to be amazed that you, who surround our city with a fleet and violent artillery and a great number of fortifications, press peace upon us, even though doing this seems alien to the office of soldiers. You seem to act with deceit to test our resolve. You should know that neither promises nor gifts inspire or entice us to do anything dishonorable. Nor does the completion of your mines frighten us. For we are united, and there is no distinction between Latins and Greeks. For

we worship Christ una fide et firma mente pro quo pugnare parati sumus. et mortem potius oppetere:[444] quem mahumeto[445] coniungi sicut facessant[446] promissa et mine[447] quibus nos movere conamini. Cum vestra classis domesticos lares reviserit: si oratores[448] de pace tractaturos mittetis: de re consultabimus. Cum armati et exercitu precincti estis officium bellantium perficite: et vobis'[449]deo propitio[450] constanti animo respondebimus. Cognoscetis quoque non cum asiaticis et effeminatis viris contendere sed cum catholicis fortissimis manum conserere. Quo dicto turci[451] vultu demisso extemplo[452] discedunt. Dum[453] turcis maiori[454] conatu: ingenio: arteque resistitur ipsorum insania incenditur. Pudet quippe eos tantum exercitum non prevalere: et sui tyranni[455] formidolosam potentiam a Rhodiis contemni.[456] Furibundi itaque machinis mortariis sagittis cathapultis dies noctesque urbem lacessunt: infestant: deterrent: experirique satagunt si rhodiorum animi facinora obire preclara audeant: quemadmodum preclara et magnifica verba proferunt. Secundum igitur alterum prelium ad turrim molis divi Nicolai[457] commissum diebus septem et triginta exactis: vires in urbis menia augent: faciemque civitatis deturpant. Nova quidem urbs crassissimo muro cincta turribus in celum erectis ornata antemuriali quoque et propugnaculis aptissimis munita trium milium quingentorum spericorum saxorum frequentissimis ictibus laceratur: deturpatur: demolitur.[458] Eamque ruinam plereque domus civium et magistratus palatia[459] perornata ac magnifica patiuntur:[460] ita ut prioris urbis facies penitus perdita videretur: ac tamquam gigantei cadaveris sarcina prostrata iaceret.[461] Attoniti[462] sunt plurimorum animi sed princeps vir quidem magna sapientia generositate atque magnanimitate preclaris ac with one faith and a strong mind for which we are prepared to fight. We are ready to die rather than join Mohammed, even if the promises and threats you make take place. When your fleet shall return to its native land, then you may send ambassadors to discuss peace and then we will negotiate it. Since you are armed and have surrounded us with an army, do your duty and fight, and, God willing, we will respond with a resolute spirit. You will learn, too, you contend not with Asiatics[19] and effeminate men, but are fighting with the bravest of Catholic men."

After these words were exchanged, the Turk at once dejectedly departed.[20] As long as the Rhodians resisted, the Turkish efforts, talent, and trickery intensified, and they were whipped into a frenzy. It shamed them that so great an army as theirs did not prevail, and the terrible power of their tyrant was slighted by the Rhodians. Therefore, now furious, they struck, they attacked, and they terrified the city with guns, mortars, arrows, and catapults day and night. They tested the soul of the Rhodians to see if they could stand up to such infamous crimes, and how they would live up to such distinguished and magnificent words. Consequently, after they had assaulted the tower and the

mole of St. Nicholas for exactly thirty-seven days, the Turks increased their forces opposite the walls of the city and began to destroy its front side. A new, extremely thick wall, with towers raised up open to the sky (equipped also with a front wall and fortified with most defensible of fortifications) girded the city. A steady Turkish barrage of 3,500 round stone shot tore to pieces, destroyed, and demolished it. Many of the houses of the citizens and the elaborate and magnificent palace of the masters suffered so greatly that the former appearance of the city seemed thoroughly lost and a huge pile of dead bodies lay on the ground.

Many were stunned, but the prince, a great man full of wisdom and nobility, with a distinguished and magnificent retinue of horsemen and magnificis coinitatus equitibus: pugnatorumque globo fortissimo stipatus: spem in deum immortalem ac filium eius dominum nostrum ihesum christum: eiusque genitricem precursoremque[463] sanctum Iohannem baptistam dirigens: cunctorum mentes solidat. Nec defuerunt magnanimi baiulivi: priores: preceptores: ac fratres sacri ordinis hierosolymitani[464] pariter negociatores: indigeneque et greci: qui pro fide[465] orthodoxa fortiter pugnare[466] non formidant. Non deterrebat[467] profecto animos murorum formidanda ruina: non metum incutiebat facilis hostium ascensus: non machinarum impetuosissimi iactus mentes perturbant. Autumant turci[468] parvo momento urbem subigere. Putant nostri spe et fide pleni mahumetanam[469] gentem facile propulsatum iri. Hinc turci in[470] aurora et solis occasu ad ripam fossarum fistulis et tympanis turcensibus[471] solitum cantum edunt; exultantque de futura victoria. Nostri in pomerio tubarum clangore iubilant. Princeps noster preclarissimus ingenti acumine preditus prope diem hostilem invasionem futuram coniectat. Maturo igitur consilio presidia menium instituit. Hisque prestantes viros preficit: subsidia quoque non negligit: quibus et electissimos sui ordinis cuiusuis nationis baiulivos et equites preesse voluit: qui presto casu urgente adesse debeant. Ipse vero partes subsidii non recusat. Quinimmo[472] assiduo labori non parcens: in pomerio menium lapsorum residet: illic[473] somnum quamvis non diuturnum sumit: cenitat[474] versatur. Magistri vestigia strenuissimus quisque sequitur: nec primi: nec mediocres: nec infimi onus recusant. Turci[475] vero in castris preconis voce promulgant urbis supellectilem in direptionem transituram: impuberem etatem sub iugum ut fidem abneget mittendam. Provectos[476] vero et adolescentes ad unum iugulandos et a troop of most brave warriors, calmed them down and restored their hope in Almighty God, his son, our lord Jesus Christ, his mother, and his relative and precursor, St. John the Baptist. The great bailiffs, priors, preceptors, and brothers of the holy Order of Jerusalem were not found wanting; likewise, the merchants and native Greeks did not fear fighting bravely for the orthodox faith. Surely they were not frightened by ruined walls; they did not dread the enemy's easy access; and the

extremely heavy fire of guns did not trouble their minds.

The Turks claimed they could conquer the city in small stages. Our men thought, with full hope and faith, that they could easily drive off the people of Mohammad. By the bank of the ditch, the Turks, from sunrise to sunset, sang a customary song with pipes and drums, exalting in their upcoming victory. Our men, in the open space near the walls, rejoiced with the blare of trumpets. By the next day, our wise leader, famed for his great acumen, surmised that the planned enemy invasion would take place within a day. Therefore, with a well-thought out plan, he quickly erected prefabricated siegeworks. He posted excellent men in charge of these; nor did he neglect the reserves, over whom he appointed as officers the most outstanding bailiffs and Knights of the Order from each langue, except for those who at the time had to be away for an urgent reason. Nor did he spare himself. Not refusing any hard labor, he stayed in the empty space left by the fallen walls, where he snatched what little sleep he could, ate, and remained at the ready. The most courageous of the Rhodians followed the master's example; neither the upper, nor middle, nor poorest refused duty.

The herald of the Turks cried out from the camp that the goods of the city would be taken as plunder and that the beardless boys would be sent into slavery so that they might come to deny their faith. The throats of the older boys reaching manhood would be cut,[21] and qui vivi capti essent palis quos ad id exequendum milia octo[477] paraverant cruciandos: civitatis ditione turcorum[478] tyranno[479] reservata. His divulgatis properant[480] turci[481] civitatem aggredi priusquam id moliantur mahumetum suo more invocant: corpus lavant purgantque. Sacculos ad rapinam parant funiculos ad capitivos religandos zonis connectunt. Pridie quem pugna iniretur totaque[482] nocte diei continue ac diluculo quod mane quo pugnatum est precessit octo machine muris obiecte saxa ingentia assidue torquent. Quod loco propugnaculorum adhibitum erat diruunt. Vigiles quoque ac custodes et menium presidia partim occidunt: ut muris quisquam superstare vix[483] posset nisi summo astu occultaretur et scalas ad signum campane paululum descenderet et demum conscenderet. Nec tempus datum est propugnacula denuo instaurandi cum bombardarum ictus frequentiores essent: ita ut tam parvo tempore trecenta vel circiter saxa iacta sint. Turci[484] vero iactu[485] machinarum peracto ad signum iactus mortarii: quod pridem eo in loco constituerant confertissimi magno impetu quem celeriter quinto kalendas Augusti ruinam orto sole conscendunt. Erat namque[486] facilis ut diximus eis ascensus immo[487] facilior quam nostris per scalas. Superiora quoque murorum loca occupant: trucidato quod illic erat presidio quod primum[488] tanto impetui resistere nequivit antequam subsidia nostra scalas conscenderint:[489] et illic hostilia signa statuunt. Idem quoque faciunt ad turrim italie cuius verticem oppugnant. Clamor undique oritur:

manus quoque viriliter conseritur: magnaque vi pugnatur. Nostri quoque a dextro sinistroque cornu[490] fortiter hosti resistunt. Ubi affuerunt gloriose dimicantes miles prestantissimus[491] dominus de montelio Capitaneus armis pollens: baiulivi quoque et equites hierosolymorum:[492] ac negociatores: non paucique indigene: et cuiusuis nationis strenui: quorum quidam inter confertissimos[493] hostes acriter dimicantes cecidere: alii multis the Turks had prepared 8,000 stakes for those captured alive to be impaled. The final fate of the city was reserved for the Turkish ruler. After these threats were made public, the Turks hastened to attack the city. Before the assault, they cried out in their customary way to Mohammed, and washed and cleansed their bodies. They prepared sacks to carry off plunder, and they attached cords to their belts to tie up captives.

During the day and night before the fight began, up until the dawn of the morning of battle, eight guns set before the walls fired huge stones. The site erected in place of the bulwark was destroyed. The sentries, guardians, and garrison on the city walls almost all perished. Anyone who had been stationed on the walls was killed, unless he had taken cover when a bell rang to signal that he should climb down for a while and then up the ladders with great adeptness. There was no time for repairing the fortifications since the bombards fired such a steady barrage; in a short period of time, they discharged almost three hundred shot. After the Turkish barrage ended with the signal of the firing of a mortar, the Turkish force, which on the day before had been stationed in a closely-packed formation, overran the ruins at daybreak on the fifth of the Kalens of August.[22] As we have said, their ascent was a very easy one, in fact, far easier than our men who had to climb ladders. The Turks occupied the higher walls. Our men atop the walls, acting as a garrison, were slaughtered because they could not hold off such a massive charge while our reinforcements climbed up the ladders. The enemy set up their standards at that spot. They did the same on the Italian tower, the top of which they attacked. A tremendous cry arose from all sides: the troops joined in battle very courageously, and they fought with great force. Our men from the right and left flanks bravely resisted the enemy. Present there, in the midst of this glorious struggle, was the pre-eminent knight, the lord of Monthélie[23] (a captain greatly skilled in the force of arms), as were the bailiffs and knights of Jerusalem, the merchants, and many natives and strong men of each nation. Some of them were killed, fighting bitterly among the tightly packed enemy; others vulneribus acceptis vitam servavere. Scalis quoque que quatuor erant quibus in vicum iudeorum descendebatur: una iussu principis noscri[494] perfracta qua turci[495] descendere ceperant extemplo[496] conscensis Clarissimus magister et princeps noster Petrus daubusson preclara comitatus cohorte magno fortique animo hosti se obiicit: scalamque conscendit. Hostem quoque

viriliter oppugnat propulsat:[497] quosdamque trucidat. Nec aliter ipse suique commilitones[498] quibus comitatus erat pro fide catholica: et re publica[499] christianorum pugnavere quam olim gloriosi machabei pro cultu divino et hebreorum libertate preliati sunt. Nec haud secus quam plerique Romani[500] principes pro tutanda patria dimicavere: qui observatam rem publicam[501] patres patrie merverunt appellari. Hos enim precellentissimos viros imitatus princeps et magister noster: discrimina non formidans: vulneribus quinque in corpore exceptis[502] quorum unum letale censebatur nisi medicorum cura remedium attulisset: rhodiorum rem publicam tutatus est: servavit: restituit.[503] Ob quod preclarum quidem facinus pater patrie optimo iure apellandus est. Turci[504] enim perpulchre[505] armati duo milia quingenti super muros[506] erant confertissimi: nostras secum manus conserentes armorum vi propellare nitebantur. Primorum tamen[507] virtus invicta persistens divino presidio suftulta nequaquam loco cessit. Sequebatur quoque turcos[508] qui muris potiti erant ingens turcorum[509] multitudo que totum campum adiacentem: ruinam: vallum et fossam expleverat: ut terra vix conspici posset. Affirmant perfuge: quadraginta milia turcorum invasioni adesse.[510] Pugnatum est duabus horis ambigua fortuna: modo ad nostras: modo ad turcos[511] victoria inclinante. Tandem divina dementia principis et nostrorum virtutem favente survived after receiving many wounds. There were four ladders that led down into the Street of the Jews. Immediately after climbing up, our men, by order of our master, broke up one of the ladders that the Turks had begun to climb down. Our most famous master and prince, Pierre d'Aubusson, with a large retinue of men and a strong will, climbed the ladders; he himself slew enemy soldiers. He attacked the enemy manfully; he repulsed them; he slaughtered them. He and the knights in his retinue fought on behalf of the Catholic faith and of the Christian commonwealth, just as the glorious Maccabees once struggled for the sacred worship and the freedom of the Hebrews. Many Roman princes, who fought to protect their homeland and thus watched over the state, deserved to be called Fathers of their Country. Our prince and master, imitating their example, surpassed these men; not fearing any danger, he suffered five wounds in his body, any one of which could have been fatal unless he was brought under a doctor's care for treatment. He guarded, served, and restored the state of Rhodes. Because of these famous deeds, he greatly deserves to be called father of his country.

Meanwhile, 2,500 magnificently-armed Turks were tightly packed on top of the wall, locked in hand-to-hand combat with our men, striving to drive them back by force of arms. But our front ranks, persisting with unconquerable courage, supported by divine protection, did not yield an inch. Besides the Turks who had occupied the walls, another huge group of them had so filled the field bordering the wall, the ruins, the rampart, and the ditch that the

ground could barely be seen. Deserters confirmed that forty thousand of the Turks were involved in the attack. The fighting went on for two hours with no clear result; sometimes victory tipped to our men, sometimes to the Turks. At last, divine mercy favored the virtue of our prince and of our men. turci[512] funduntur: propulsantur: ceduntur[513] tantoque impetu et celeritate terga vertunt: ut sibi ipsis necem et vulnera afferent. Spectaculo nobis fuit quod a nostris interpugnandum gestum est conspicere. Ex turcis[514] quippe qui nostras fortiter lacessebant super muros stantes trecenti a nostris in vicum iudeorum precipites trahuntur et impelluntur. Erat namque muri altitudo ad intra fere pedum viginti. Hi omnes ad unum trucidati sunt: et cadavera[515] vulneribus deformia passim iacentia intra urbem visa sunt. Cum turci[516] pedem referrent: et ad castra tenderent nostri eos consecuti sunt: et complures intra munitiones occiderunt: quorum spoliis: ac insigni tyranni[517] vexillo auro argentoque ornato quod tantae victoriae monumento extitit potiti: magno cum plausu urbem per murorum ruinam intrant. Cecidere ea in pugna turci[518] tria milia quingenti: quorum cadavera intra urbem: super menia: fossa munitionibusque hostium et mari reperta sunt et postmodum ad luem vitandam que passim deformia et lacera[519] iacebant combusta.

Interiere prout perfuge divulgarunt: qui cum exercitus a Bassa recenseretur aderant: ex turcis[520] obsidionis tempore novem milia: vulneratique sunt milia quindecim: magnisque incomoditatibus exercitum affectum affirmant. Fama satis constans[521] est et palam a perfugis vulgatur turcos[522] visionis miraculo exterritos tanta trepiditione loco cessisse ac pedem retulisse Aiunt enim cum vexilla domini nostri ihesu christi ac virginis marie: ac[523] sancti Johannis[524] baptiste religionisque hierosolymorum[525] in conflictu iussu principis erecta sunt crucem auream in aere splendidissimam hostes vidisse: apparuisse insuper candidissimam virginem clypeum[526] et hastam gestantem: ac hominem vili[527] veste obsitum splendidissimo comitatu stipatum presidio adesse. Que visio tantum terrorem[528] eis incussit: ut nullo pacto progredi ausi sint. The Turks were scattered, repulsed, and killed. They turned tail with such fury and swiftness that they killed and wounded their own men. It was a wonder for us to witness the feats that our men performed in this battle. We attacked three hundred Turks who challenged our brave men standing on the walls and hurled them headlong into the precinct of the Jews. The height of the wall was about twenty feet. They were slaughtered to a man; and the corpses, deformed by wounds, could be seen lying here and there within the city.

We followed the Turkish foot soldiers when they retreated to the camps, and many were killed within the ramparts. With spoils from this battle, the insignia of the famous tyrant, and banners decorated with gold and silver acquired as the trophy of so great a victory, our men entered the city amidst great applause through the ruined walls. Three thousand five hundred Turks

fell in the battle. The cadavers of the enemy were discovered laying within the city, on the top of the city walls, in the ditch, on the ramparts, and in the sea. Afterwards, to avoid plague, our men burned the deformed and mangled corpses.

The deserters, who had arrived with the army the Pasha had mustered, divulged that nine thousand Turks perished from the siege, fifteen thousand were wounded; they also affirmed that the army had greatly suffered. The deserters confirmed a persistent rumor spread among the Turks of a miraculous vision that frightened them out of their wits. So great was their trepidation they broke ranks and retreated on foot. They affirmed that when the banner of our lord Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, as well as that of St. John the Baptist and the Order of Jerusalem were raised in battle by order of the prince, the enemy saw the most splendid golden cross raised aloft in the air. In addition, a glistening white maiden bearing a shield and spear appeared, with a man in peasant garb, surrounded by a most splendid company of retainers who came there in defense. This vision instilled such a terror in the enemy that none dared to advance despite every agreement made among them.

Fatendum quoque est: hanc victoriam celo demissam esse. Quomodo tam parva militum nostrorum copia hosti potentissimo iam muris potito resistere potuisset nisi divinum presidium affuisset: Quomodo tam parva temporis morula: tanta hostium manus cecidisset nisi angelus dei victoriam attulisset et inimicos trucidasset. Erant enim tot occisorum cadavera: et ita perpulchre ordinata:[529] ut non horarum sed dierum opus esse videretur:[530] et id potius[531] divinitus quam humanitus contigisse putetur. Quis hostem menia possidentem: iamque victoria lascivientem et exultantem terruit. Deus clementissimus. Quis hostem ne scalis descenderet antequam subsidia conscenderent prohibuit. Deus fortissimus. Quis eorum mentes obcecavit[532] ut post primam pugnam non aggrediuntur nostras: et multis vulneribus oppressos et defatigatos oppugnent. Deus clementissimus. Quis tam potentem hostem qui tot et tanta regna subiugavit[533] prohibuit:[534] ne hunc hierosolymorum[535] principatum: mediocrem quidem ac ceterorum comparatione tenuem post Constantinopolitane urbis excidium sue ditionis faceret. Deus sapientissimus. Agamus igitur gratias de tanto beneficio ei qui nos ab impiorum manibus preservavit.[536] Turci[537] enim spe[538] potiunde Urbis[539] ducti: queque crudelitatis genera exercere proponebant: sed nephando optatu frustrati tamquam pecudes trucidantur: propulsantur: vincuntur.[540] Extemplo[541] pugna commissa ad primum lapidem castra et papiliones turci[542] collocant: machinas ad littus maris devehunt: et navigiis onerant. Vulneratos et quos ex lycia[543] traiecerant multos dies usque ad eorum discessum[544] in turchiam[545] cum omni supellectili revehunt.

Thus, it must be admitted that this victory came down from heaven. How could so small an army as ours overcome such a powerful enemy, already master of the walls, unless divine providence protected it? How in such a short time could so great an enemy power be cut down unless an angel of God caused the victory and slaughtered the enemies? For there were so many well-ordered bodies of the dead that it seemed to have been the work not of hours but of days: and this may be thought to have happened by divine providence rather than by human power. Who else could have terrified the enemy in possession of the city walls, frolicking and exulting in victory? God, most merciful. Who else could prevent the enemy from climbing down the ladders before our reinforcements could climb up them? God, most powerful. Who else could cloud the judgment of the Turks so that after the first engagement they did not advance, and attack our wounded and fatigued men? God, most merciful. Who else prevented such a powerful enemy, who, after his army had sacked the city of Constantinople bringing it under his authority, and had subjugated so many great kingdoms, but had not won this principate of Jerusalem, so humble and weak in comparison with the others? God, most wise. Therefore, we give thanks for the great service to He who preserved us from the hands of the impious. For the Turks, driven by the hope of capturing the city (over which they intended to exercise all types of cruelty) were frustrated in their impious wish; they were slaughtered, repulsed, and conquered like sheep. Immediately, after the fight was over, the Turks set up their camp and tents at the first milestone. They dragged their guns to the sea shore and loaded their vessels. For many days, they transported the wounded and those they had ferried from Lycia, along with all their possessions, all the way back to their departure point in Turkey. Hortos[546] vineas predia[547] si que[548] intacta illesaque remanserant: vastant[549] depopulantur: incendunt: ingenti pecudis[550] multitudine abacta. Dum hec turci[551] molirentur et discessum[552] pararent: apparvere subsidiarie naves quas precellentissimus sicilie Rex Ferdinandus; fidei catholice devotissimus rhodiis mittebat. Que ad auram post meridiem: turcis[553] conspicientibus cum rhodiorum plausu et gratiis[554] altissimo datis portum intrare non formidant. Hostis machinas quas ad hoc paraverat in eas[555] dirigit. Iactu machinarum una detrimentum malo excipit altera incolumis evasit. Anchoris ante aditum portus naves subnixe: vi tormentorum et maris estu fervente paulurn[556] ab aditu[557] discedunt. Hespero adveniente et procella ingruente: navis que lesa fuerat portum intrat: altera vela ventis dare compellitur. Postridie eius[558] diei cum ea navis portum subire niteretur:[559] vento[560] deliciente: dum placidum redditur mare: nec longius a classe turcensi[561] distaret: triremes turcorum[562] viginti: exercitu[563] et Rhodiis conspicientibus[564] navim aggrediuntur et oppugnant. Qui navi devehuntur viriliter se tutantur. Horis vero tribus navali prelio machinarum[565] iactu

pugnatum est. Tandem nostri victores evasere. In qua pugna triremium prefectus occiditur. Hac quoque incommoditate[566] accepta ad suos hostis revertitur: et navis subsidiaria postero die portum plenis velis intrare non formidat.

Attulerunt profecto he[567] naves nuncium quod rhodios non parva affecit leticia. Pontifice quippe littere recitantur que rhodiorum animos paterna monitione solidant. Subsidia quoque navium parata pandunt que propediem ventura erant. They laid waste, sacked, and burned any untouched gardens, vineyards, and houses that remained. They drove away huge flocks of sheep.

While the Turks were doing this and preparing their departure, there appeared the relief ships which that most excellent king of Sicily, Ferdinand, most devoted to the Catholic faith, had sent to Rhodes. In the hour after noon, these vessels did not fear entering the harbor even with the Turks looking on, while the Rhodians gave their deepest thanks. The enemy aimed the guns they had prepared against them. When the guns were fired, one [of the Sicilian ships] received damage to its mast from gun fire, the other escaped unharmed. The ships, anchored at the approach to the harbor, gradually drifted to the harbor opening because of the raging force of the winds and the agitation of the sea. With the onset of evening and the raging storm, the ship that had been damaged entered the harbor. The other was forced to set its sails to run before the wind. On the next day, that ship tried to enter the harbor once the wind died down and the sea was becalmed. It could not stand off far from the Turkish fleet; the twenty galleys of the Turks attacked the ship, with the army and Rhodians looking on. As it drifted, the ship courageously defended itself. For three hours, a naval battle was fought with guns. At last, our men emerged victorious. In this fight the commander of the galleys had been killed. After the enemy had been defeated they turned back, and on the following day the ship could enter the harbor under full sail without fear.

These ships brought with them a message that gave Rhodes great joy. Papal letters were read aloud that lifted the spirits of the Rhodians with their fatherly advice. They also disclosed that supply ships would arrive very soon. Preterea grandem expeditionem parari nunciant: que nedum rhodios obsidione liberare: veruin etiam inimicam classem expugnare ac prosternere possit. Rhodii leto accepto nuncio clementissimum Romanum pontificem Sixtum quartum miris laudibus tollunt: laudant: predicant deoque pro eius[568] felici statu humiles preces fundunt. Hie quoque rumor ad turcos[569] transit: qui perterriti ceptum discessum[570] accelerant. Exactis igitur novem et octoginta diebus rhodiorum littore classis solvens phiscum navigare properat Illic milites et supellectilem exonerat. Ubi dies undecim[571] morata ad domesticos lares cum clade et ignominia revertitur. Qui obsidionis pericula expertus est et res publico functus officio cognovit: ad laudem dei: christiane religionis exaltationem: et

Rhodiorum gloriam: reruin gestarum commentarium edidit.

Laus Deo.[572]

They also announced that a great expedition was being prepared to lift the siege of Rhodes, to fight the enemy fleet, and to exhaust it. The Rhodians gladly heard the message, extolling with wonderful praises the most clement Roman pope, Sixtus IV; they praised and thanked God, for his positive response to the outpouring out of their humble prayers.

This rumor spread among the Turks, who became terrorized and hastened their departure. Therefore, after precisely nine and eighty days on the shore of Rhodes, the fleet hastened to sail to Physkos to unload the soldiers and supplies. It stayed there for eleven days, then returned home with disaster and ignominy.

For those who experienced the dangers of the siege and knew that he had done his duty on behalf of the republic, to the praise of God, to the exaltation of the Christian religion and for the glory of Rhodes; this account of the deeds has been published.

Praise God.

1 Marios Philippides, *Mehmed II The Conqueror and the Fall of the Franco-Byzantine Levant to the Ottoman Turks: Some Western Views and Testimonies* (Tempe, 2007), p. 45, n. 104.

2 Eucharius Silber, 1482 (Gesamtkatalog 06009; ISTC icOO110000) and Andreas Portilia, 1480 (Gesamtkatalog 06005; ISTC ic00109000). Also see Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke http://gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de/docs/GW06005.htm • Letzte Änderung: 2009–12–14.

3 ISTC ic00109000, note: "The Athens Gennad copy is wrongly imposed in quire b, b5 verso being printed on the verso ofb3 recto (David Jordan)."

1 Odense (1482): Incipit Gwilhermus rhodiorum vice cancellarius de obsidione et bello rhodiano. Sub anno domino Millesimoquadringentesimo octragesimo primo modo. Pro quo Sixt papa quartus fecit annum iubileum per universum orbem. Capitulum primum. Ulm (1496): Guillelmi Caoursin Rhodiorum Vicecancellarii: obsidionis Rhodie Urbis descriptio.

2 Barcelon (1481), Ulm (1496): turchorum.

3 Ulm (1496): tirannum.

4 Ulm (1496): machometem.

5 Barcelona (1481): turchis; Ulm (1496): thurcis.

6 Ulm (1496): discidia.

7 Ulm (1496): cum eo tamen.

8 Barcelona (1481): oppugnationem; Ulm (1496): added brackets around (qui nunc imperat: post Constantinopolis expugnationem).

9 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): cunque.

10 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): complures.

11 Paris BN Lat. 6067 inserts at this point: "complures vicines sibi diciones subegisset, non nullasque ad persolvendum animam vectigal compulisset."

12 Barcelona (1481), Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): iherosolimorum.

13 Barcelona (1481): innaserit.

14 Ulm (1496): obsederit ac oppugnaverit.

15 Barcelona (1481): ignominia discrimen et clades reportavit; Ulm (1496): reportaverit.

1 Mehmet did not mount four separate full-scale sieges of Rhodes prior to 1480. A Turkish fleet raided Rhodes in 1454; Venetians raided Rhodes in 1459; and in 1466 the central convent went on alert because a Turkish ship was patrolling Rhodian waters (AOM 282, f. 160v). The masters of the Order issued more than four summonses for the defense of Rhodes. Caoursin may have counted Ottoman attacks upon the Order's outlying islands: Kos, Symi, and Nyseros.

16 Barcelona (1481): turchis.

17 Ulm (1496): lapidibusque.

18 Ulm (1496): perustis.

19 Ulm (1496): perierunt et sic terra.

20 Ulm (1496): succubuerunt hostes.

21 Odense (1482): Secundum capitulum. Conspecta igitur.

22 Barcelona (1481): temptare. Odense (1482), Paris BN Lat. 6067: versuciaque temptare. Ulm (1496): versuciaque tentare decrevit.

23 Ulm (1496): Sepius submissis.

24 Paris, BN Lat 6067: parent studuit fedus, a clear error. Ulm (1496): parent confederationem.

25 Venice (1480), Barcelona (1481), Odense (1482): p[er]missa; Ulm (1496): promissa.

26 Ulm (1496): quidpiam.

27 Barcelona (1481): sepe numero.

28 Barcelona (1481): videretur.

29 Barcelona (1481): hierosolimorum.

30 Barcelona (1481): muriera. Ulm (1496): quidem se munera.

31 Barcelona (1481): se accepturum.

32 Ulm (1496): magister.

33 Paris, BN Lat 6067: muniscula, an obvious error.

34 Barcelona (1481), Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): contempnunt.

35 Paris, BN Lat 6067: Christi fidem.

36 Ulm (1496): quam ipsi ex.

37 Ulm (1496): defendunt et iuuant.

38 Odense (1482): Tercium capitulum: Is de causis.

39 Odense (1482): inerorabile.

40 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): concepit.

41 Barcelona (1481): nomen funditus delere.

42 Paris, BN Lat 6067: nomen funditus delere.

2 The Order negotiated with Mehmet through his son, Djem, who acted as an intermediary. They arrived at a temporary truce that delayed the siege for a year.

43 Barcelona (1481): quorundam suasionibus; Paris, BN Lat. 6067: suasionibus.

44 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): turchos.

45 Barcelona (1481): cognoverat. Ulm (1496): cognoverant.

46 Barcelona (1481): prodicti (Philippedes, proditi).

47 Ulm (1496): Anthonius.

48 Barcelona (1481): diucius.

49 Barcelona (1481): quonammodo.

50 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): infestus.

51 Barcelona (1481): menia.

52 Ulm (1496): civitatis.

53 Barcelona (1481): et edificia. Ulm (1496): edifitiaque.

54 Barcelona (1481): turchum. Ulm (1496): thurcum.

55 Barcelona (1481): Costantinopoli.

56 Odense (1482): pollicitaconis. Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): policitationis.

57 Barcelona (1481): basam; Ulm (1496): bassiam.

58 Barcelona (1481): palthologorum; Ulm (1496): paleologorum.

59 Ulm (1496): allerit.

60 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): Sequutus.

61 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): euboicus.

62 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): sophiano

63 Barcelona (1481): supersticiosus.

64 Barcelona (1481): euboicam.

65 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): turchum.

66 Ulm (1496): aliquando rhodi.

67 Barcelona (1481): postea etim nuncii.

3 Mesīḥ Pasha (d. 1501) had been a nephew of Constantine XII, the last emperor of Byzantium, and a member of the Paleologus family. He had been captured in 1453 as a child and raised as a page in Mehmet's household. He became one of Mehmet's viziers until his defeat at Rhodes; he later became the admiral of the Turkish navy. See Halil Inalcik, "Mesīḥ Pasha," *The Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition, Volume VI: Mahk-Mid.* (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1991): 1025–1026.

68 Paris, BN Lat. 6067, phrase "Hic etiam suasor obsidionis extitit," added as a correction in the margin.

69 Ulm (1496): Eractis.

70 Odense (1482): Quartum capitulum. Exactis itaque his.

71 Barcelona (1481): itaque in.

72 Odense (1482): in oriundus. Ulm (1496): inordinandis.

73 Barcelona (1481): tandem base res placuit; Ulm (1496): Bassie.

74 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): abnegaverant.

75 Odense (1482): antonins; Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): Anthonius.

76 Barcelona (1481): nonnullus.

77 Ulm (1496): subsidia a longinquis.

78 Barcelona (1481): sequeces.

79 Odense (1482): Quintum capitulum. Dum hec bisancii.

80 Venice (1480) printed "&"; Ulm (1496) expanded as "ac."

81 Barcelona (1481): danbusson; Ulm (1496): Daubussou (probably printing errors).

82 Ulm (1496): et excellenti.

83 Ulm (1496): prudenttia preditus; illistri.

84 Ulm (1496): edoctus.

85 Ulm (1496): munivit et ampliavit.

86 Barcelona (1481): vini.

87 Ulm (1496): vini et comeatuum magnam copiam.

88 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): et.

89 Barcelona (1481): Ita nutu dei: Reverendissimi magistri.

90 Barcelona (1481): naves et milites. Ulm (1496): naves ac milites.

4 AOM 75, f. 181v, Demetrius Sophiana came to Rhodes as Djem's emissary in February 1478, after the construction of the fosse. He contributed little information about the defenses of Rhodes, but knew that d'Aubusson was importing provisions and grain in expectation of an attack.

91 Barcelona (1481), Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): Anthonius.

92 Odense (1482): Sextum capitulum. Proditor anthonius horum.

93 Barcelona (1481): negligenter. Ulm (1496): arbitratus omnia apud rhodios negligentius preteriri.

94 Barcelona (1481): basam. Ulm (1496): bassiam.

95 Barcelona (1481): Id ipsum.

96 Barcelona (1481): basa; Ulm (1496): bassiam.

97 Barcelona (1481): Turchum; Ulm (1496): thurcum.

98 Barcelona (1481), Ulm (1496): turchi.

99 Ulm (1496): narrantibus.

100 Barcelona (1481): consici.

101 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): magnificenciam.

102 Barcelona (1481): debere.

103 Odense (1482): pocius appetere.

104 Barcelona (1481): turpiter aliquid.

105 Barcelona (1481): inbecille. Ulm (1496): inbecilloque.

106 Barcelona (1481): in animo.

107 Ulm (1496): certis.

108 Ulm (1496): atque.

109 Ulm (1496): expugnaturum.

110 Barcelona (1481): numeratus Georgius. Ulm (1496): Georius.

111 Ulm (1496): chiis.

112 Barcelona (1481): turchum; Ulm (1496): thurcum.

113 Barcelona (1481): turcho; Ulm (1496): thurco.

114 Barcelona (1481): graciis.

115 Ulm (1496): urbemque.

116 Odense (1482): minuta.

117 Ulm (1496): fuerat.

118 Ulm (1496): thurci.

119 Ulm (1496): Georius.

120 Ulm (1496): vi magna fieret.

121 Ulm (1496): huic.

122 Ulm (1496): thurci.

123 Odense (1482): Septimum capitulum. Hostem quoque non.

124 Ulm (1496): aerisque.

125 Ulm (1496): rhomani.

126 Odense (1482): suos peregeum (per omitted).

127 Ulm (1496): facile pelagus prolaturum.

128 Ulm (1496): bassiis: in sinistrum.

129 Ulm (1496): Decretumque.

130 Ulm (1496): helesponto.

131 Ulm (1496): litiam.

132 Odense (1482): que insule ("rhodiorum" omitted).

133 Odense (1482): licium; Ulm (1496): litium.

134 Ulm (1496): et.

135 Ulm (1496): rhodium.

136 Ulm (1496): reliquus.

137 Ulm (1496): Bassia.

138 Odense (1482): Octavum capitulum. Bassa paliologus expediciones.

139 Ulm (1496): Anthonium.

140 Ulm (1496): mortem.

141 Ulm (1496): Thurcos.

142 Ulm (1496): res lateret.

143 Ulm (1496): portus et passus.

144 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): ascucia.

145 Ulm (1496): assiduis.

146 Ulm (1496): literis.

147 Ulm (1496): thurchia.

148 Odense (1482): licia; Ulm (1496): litia.

149 Ulm (1496): vita thurcum excessisse.

150 Ulm (1496): de.

151 Ulm (1496): prospitiens.

152 Ulm (1496): monoliti.

153 Ulm (1496): opida.

154 Ulm (1496): quantocius.

155 Ulm (1496): cuilibet.

156 Odense (1482): Nonum capitulum. Dum hec magno.

157 Ulm (1496): vigil in.

158 Ulm (1496): in.

159 Ulm (1496): properans.

5 Rachel Gibson, "Correspondence from Candia: Venetian Trade in Shifting Water," an unpublished paper submitted to Kathryn Reyerson, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 15 December 2009, found that the Venetian merchant Marco Bembo knew of the Turkish fleet movements from the island of Candia in the spring and summer of 1480. Source: Marco Bembo of Venice, Merchant. *Correspondence from Candia, Crete: 1479–1482*. University of Minnesota, TC Wilson Library Bell. 1479 fBe. no. 1479c.

160 Ulm (1496): rhodiorum urbem freto.

161 Ulm (1496): transacto navigent repente velis.

162 Ulm (1496): Apulit.

163 Ulm (1496): calendas.

164 Odense (1482): iunn.

165 Ulm (1496): domini.

166 Ulm (1496): millesimoquadringentesimooctuagesimo.

167 Ulm (1496): primum in terram exposito: In vertice.

168 Ulm (1496): coles.

169 Ulm (1496): aqua.

170 Ulm (1496): ab.

171 Ulm (1496): colis.

172 Ulm (1496): pars ad devehendum.

173 Odense (1482): Decimum capitulum. In classis adventu.

174 Ulm (1496): thurci.

175 Ulm (1496): thurci.

176 Ulm (1496): thurci autem capite.

177 Odense (1482): plansu revertunt.

178 Odense (1482): Undecimum capitulum. Postridie eius diei.

179 Ulm (1496): hostes.

180 odense (1482), Ulm (1496): ortis.

181 Odense (1482): Anthonii.

182 Ulm (1496): omnis.

183 Ulm (1496): collocant.

6 23 May 1480.

7 Dupuis identifies this man as a Catalan knight named Pierre de Bourges who sallied forth upon d'Aubusson's orders. Curte reports that this man was an inexperienced Portuguese knight of the Order named Pedro, who went forth to bring back men who had engaged the enemy without orders.

184 Ulm (1496): conantur.

185 Ulm (1496): dextra.

186 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): ortulo.

187 Odense (1482): Duodecimum capitulum. Georgius machinarum egregius.

188 Ulm (1496), has brackets around "que magistri palacium munit."

189 Ulm (1496): clamansque.

190 Ulm (1496): pene.

191 Ulm (1496): ex temploque.

192 Ulm (1496): eloquens.

193 Ulm (1496): commodo.

194 Ulm (1496): dispositione ac qualitate.

195 Ulm (1496): sedecim.

196 Ulm (1496): duorum palmorum.

197 Ulm (1496): aliter.

198 Ulm (1496): sencientibus.

199 Ulm (1496): erroris.

200 Ulm (1496): sciret.

201 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

202 Ulm (1496): perspicarum [?].

203 Ulm (1496): Georium.

204 Odense (1482): machiuatum.

205 Ulm (1496): bellorum.

206 Odense (1482): spectat.

207 Odense (1482): Decimumtercium capitulum. Omni igitur conatu.

208 Ulm (1496): thurci.

209 Ulm (1496): hac.

210 Ulm (1496): moles.

211 Ulm (1496): artifitio.

212 Ulm (1496): Machinis (no "A").

213 Venice (1480), prints q (with a lower crossbar) + dē, an abbreviation expanded in other editions as "quidem" (Odense, 1482) and "quedam" (Ulm, 1496). The abbreviation could also be "quoddam." "Quidem" is a linkage; the other words point to a specific thing.

214 Ulm (1496): agreditur.

215 Ulm (1496): spericorum.

216 Ulm (1496): presertim.

217 Ulm (1496): que.

218 Ulm (1496): pendere.

219 Odense (1482): vehemencia ingencia.

220 Ulm (1496): arena.

221 Ulm (1496): negetur.

222 Ulm (1496): deturpant et devastant.

223 Odense (1482): Decimumquartum capitulum. Cum autem turris.

224 Ulm (1496): excisis.

225 Ulm (1496): circumducit.

226 Ulm (1496): presidium.

227 Ulm (1496): loci turrisque capacitate.

228 Ulm (1496): nam que iussu magister.

229 Odense (1482): qui tuicione.

230 Ulm (1496): turris.

231 Ulm (1496): impedimento essent hosti.

232 Ulm (1496): in signis.

233 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

234 Ulm (1496): complete.

235 Odense (1482): stacionem oppugnacione.

236 Odense (1482): Decimumquitum capiculum. His rebus magno.

237 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

238 Ulm (1496): oppugnant.

239 Ulm (1496): oppugnant.

240 Ulm (1496): thurci.

241 Ulm (1496): fugantur et trucidantur.

242 Ulm (1496): thurci.

243 Ulm (1496): interiere: plurimi vero vulnerati sunt.

244 Ulm (1496) omitted "quidem desiderati."

245 Ulm (1496): phalango.

246 Odense (1482): pociunde. Ulm (1496): pociundi.

247 Ulm (1496): militum presidio.

248 Ulm (1496): thurci.

249 Ulm (1496): ac menia.

250 Ulm (1496): agatur.

251 Odense (1482): Decimumsextum capitulum. Sequenti igitur nocte.

8 A Byzantine icon venerated by both the Latins and Greeks on Rhodes. The Order took the icon with them to Malta. The icon left Malta in 1798 and is now located in Montenegro.

252 Ulm (1496): ponunt: que.

253 Ulm (1496): in vertice molis.

254 Ulm (1496): moendinorum in turrim et.

255 Ulm (1496): cognito.

256 Ulm (1496): munitones.

257 Ulm (1496): obicitur.

258 Ulm (1496): Inter diu.

259 Ulm (1496): violentiaque.

260 Ulm (1496): Nullusque.

261 Ulm (1496): Georius.

262 Ulm (1496): prefuga.

263 Ulm (1496): saxa iaciunt.

264 Ulm (1496): lapidum.

265 Ulm (1496): tamquem.

266 Ulm (1496): opidanis.

267Odense (1482): Decimumseptimum capitulum. Spe igitur in.

5 In classical Latin, "pom*e*rium" describes a cleared fortified space within the perimeter of the walls. In medieval Latin, "pon*a*rium" meant an apple orchard, and was occasionally spelt with an "e." Kay translated this word as "ditch," as did Dupuis, who used the word "fosse."

10 Modern-day Kastellorizo.

11 Or, one hundred miles.

268 Ulm (1496): Nec hec.

269 Ulm (1496): saxa supra in arem.

270 Ulm (1496): quippe.

271 Ulm (1496): eiusque.

272 Ulm (1496): genitrici marie virgini intemerate.

273 Odense (1482): [B]asa. Ulm (1496): Bassia.

274 Odense (1482): Decimumoctavum capitulum. [B]asa vero principis.

275 Ulm (1496): rerum arbitratur omnibus facile.

176 Ulm (1496): Bassia.

277 Ulm (1496): istud ut facinus.

278 Ulm (1496): subiiciunt.

279 Ulm (1496): vix tutatus confossus esset Unde.

280 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

281 Ulm (1496): Italice.

282 Ulm (1496): reparationem.

283 Ulm (1496): adhibitis a nostris conspectis.

284 Ulm (1496): Eruptione thurcorum itaque.

285 Ulm (1496): ex templo.

286 Ulm (1496): fugant miserabiliterque trucidant.

287 Ulm (1496): thurci.

288 Ulm (1496): in gladio.

289 Ulm (1496): munitione facta.

290 Ulm (1496): opidanorumque.

291 Ulm (1496): Magister autem victores.

292 Ulm (1496) replaced "et alio" with "alioruntue ad queque."

293 Odense (1482): Decimumnonum capitulum. Paucis diebus interiectis.

294 Ulm (1496): thurci.

295 Ulm (1496): superiorique clade repulsa.

296 Ulm (1496): turris.

297 Odense (1482): fonteque.

298 Ulm (1496): litus.

12 The Italian station included the walls of the Jewish quarter.

299 Ulm (1496): thurci.

300 Ulm (1496): deiiciunt.

301 Odense (1482): moris.

302 Ulm (1496): thurci.

303 Ulm (1496): deiectionem.

304 Ulm (1496): experiuntur: statuunt scaffarum.

305 Ulm (1496): paratas.

306 Ulm (1496): conflictum ornatas subordinavit.

307 Ulm (1496): quidem.

308 Ulm (1496): prosternerent ac demolirentur.

309 Ulm (1496): pratermittunt.

310 Ulm (1496): cymbas.

311 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

312 Ulm (1496): pandariis.

313 Odense (1482) dirvant.

314 Ulm (1496): aderant.

315 Ulm (1496): excisis.

316 Ulm (1496): inpensarum.

317 Ulm (1496): parcitur sarcinis.

318 Ulm (1496): et alia.

319 Ulm (1496): sub dubitavere nostri.

320 Ulm (1496): thurci.

321 Ulm (1496): Qui.

322 Odense (1482): providencia; Ulm (1496): pudenda.

323 Ulm (1496): quoque.

324 Odense (1482): robustissimorum menibus.

325 Ulm (1496): in iussu.

326 Venice (1480): Non est qui non sane diiudicaret.

327 Ulm (1496): adethe.

328 Ulm (1496): come.

329 Venice (1480): domicilum.

330 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): iherosolimorum.

331 Ulm (1496): asinlum.

332 Ulm (1496): duo etiam mercenarii.

333 Odense (1482): Vicesimum capitulum. [D]uo mercenarii iuuenes.

334 Ulm (1496): suplitio.

335 Ulm (1496): xici calendas.

336 Ulm (1496): timpanorumque.

337 Ulm (1496): cymbe.

338 Ulm (1496): muri.

339 Ulm (1496): thurci.

340 Ulm (1496): thurci.

341 Ulm (1496): cymbis.

342 Ulm (1496): ignes.

343 Ulm (1496): thurci.

344 Ulm (1496): catapultis.

345 Ulm (1496): & dum.

346 Ulm (1496): iaculant.

347 Ulm (1496): pungna.

348 Ulm (1496): ac victis.

349 Ulm (1496): comodi eis vendicant.

350 Ulm (1496): thurcis.

351 Ulm (1496): memorem.

352 Ulm (1496): generis.

353 Ulm (1496): thurci.

354 Ulm (1496): quidam.

355 Ulm (1496): thurcoque.

356 Ulm (1496): eiusdem mors.

13 Kay translated this as "cousin," not son-in-law.

357 Ulm (1496): thurcosque.

358 Ulm (1496): quingentos.

359 Ulm (1496): bassiam.

360 Ulm (1496): thurco.

361 Ulm (1496): denunciat:

362 Ulm (1496): quoque mens.

363 Ulm (1496): thurcensem.

364 Ulm (1496): autem spem turris.

365 Ulm (1496): convercant.

366 Ulm (1496): turci ad urbem.

367 Ulm (1496): oculto.

368 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): laborinthi.

369 Ulm (1496): assidue.

370 Ulm (1496): pensantque eis conducere.

371 Ulm (1496): oculto.

372 Odense (1482): Vicesimumquintum [sic] capitulum. Precellentissimus princeps noster.

373 Ulm(l496): et.

374 Ulm (1496): Anthonius.

375 Ulm (1496): viris orientem.

376 Ulm (1496): sumopere.

377 Odense (1482): obiicit.

378 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimorum.

379 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): prudencia.

380 Odense (1482): ingenii.

381 Odense (1482): Excellit.

382 Venice (1480): versilem.

383 Ulm (1496): tributum.

384 Ulm (1496): Edificaturque.

385 Odense (1482): Capitulum xxiii [sic]. Excogitatum quoque est.

386 Ulm (1496): inviti.

14 Monthélie is a village in the Côte de Beaune, France.

15 The Order did not have a senatorial rank. These are probably d'Aubusson's counselors and other conventual officers.

16 A trebuchet was a piece of pre-gunpowder artillery, consisting of a rotating beam, a counterweight and a sling.

17 Curte identifies this skilled man as the engineer John Anihoa, a Venetian.

387 Odense (1482): omitted.

388 Odense (1482): frutibus.

389 Ulm (1496): Ingesque artificiosos.

390 Odense (1482): refectis.

391 Ulm (1496): thurcis.

392 Ulm (l496): que.

393 Odense (1482): excogitant.

394 Ulm (1496): pandebant.

395 Ulm (1496): Georius.

396 Odense (1482): Vicesimumquartum capitulum. Adducitur georgius proditor.

397 Ulm (1496): Consaltus.

398 Ulm (1496): policitus.

399 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): astuciam.

400 Ulm (1496): hostium.

401 Ulm (1496): thurcus.

402 Ulm (1496): Georius.

403 Ulm (1496): in eum suspitio.

404 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

405 Ulm (1496): tianni.

406 Ulm (1496): opida.

407 Ulm (1496): prodidit.

408 Ulm (1496): rhodii.

409 Ulm (1496): per sinistre.

410 Ulm (1496): quoque & status ac conditiones.

411 Ulm (1496): thurcum.

412 Venice (1480): edocturus; Odense (1482): educturus.

413 Ulm (1496): thurcus.

414 Odense (1482): Geordius; Ulm (1496): Georius.

415 Ulm (1496): crimen.

416 Ulm (1496): convictus demum supplitio.

417 Ulm (1496), omitted "fune furce religato Georgius suffocatur. Ut animam exalavit."

418 Odense (1482): lentus.

419 Odense (1482): perdere.

420 Ulm (1496): excogitans.

421 Ulm (1496): thurcensis.

422 Ulm (1496): bassia.

423 Ulm (1496): policentur.

424 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): perniciem.

425 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimorum.

426 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimorum.

427 Ulm (1496): fidem.

428 Ulm (1496): invanum.

429 Odense (1482): temptante.

430 Odense (1482): consilio.

431 Ulm (1496): heleomonitre.

432 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

433 Ulm (1496): bassiam.

434 Odense (1482): bolvardo; Ulm (1496): bolenardo.

435 Ulm (1496): bassie.

436 Ulm (1496): ymmo.

437 Odense (1482): indulgeamus.

438 Ulm (1496): paciamur.

439 Ulm (1496): satis admirari.

440 Odense (1482): temptetis.

441 Ulm (1496): policitationes.

442 Ulm (1496): allicere possunt.

443 Ulm (1496): inter grecum & latinum.

18 Dupuis identifies this learned man as the Castellan of Rhodes, Anthony Gautier.

444 Odense (1482): appetere.

445 Ulm (1496): mahumeti.

446 Odense (1482): fatestant; Ulm (1496): coniungi ut facessant.

447 Ulm (1496): promissa vestra & mine.

448 Venice (1480): oraturos.

449 Odense (1482): nobis.

450 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): propicio.

451 Ulm (1496): thurci.

452 Ulm (1496): ex templo.

453 Ulm (1496): Et dum.

454 Odense (1482): Vicesimumsextum capitulum. Dum turcis maiori.

455 Ulm (1496): tirannii.

456 Odense (1482): contempni.

457 Odense (1482): molis nicolai.

458 Ulm (1496): deturbatur ac demolitur.

459 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): palacia.

460 Odense (1482): quaciunt; Ulm (1496): paciuntur.

461 Ulm (1496): iacere.

462 Ulm (1496): Atoniti.

19 This speech echoes the advice given Mehmet (pp. 86–87) that the fighting prowess of the European Knights of Rhodes could not compare with the non-western forces that the Turks had defeated elsewhere. The same comparison between Europeans and Asiatics appears in D'Aubusson's magisterial bull dated 28 May 1480 (see Appendix 1, document 4).

20 The following paragraphs are missing from Philippides, *Mehmed II*, p. 302.

463 Ulm (1496): precursorem quoque.

464 Odense (1482): iherosolimitani; Ulm (1496): hierosolimitani.

465 Ulm (1496): qui omnes unanimiter pro fide.

466 Venice (1480): puguare.

467 Ulm (1496): deterrebant.

468 Ulm (1496): thurci.

469 Ulm (1496): mahumeteam.

470 Odense (1482): Vicesimum septimum capitulum. [H]inc turci in.

471 Ulm (1496): thurcensibus.

472 Ulm (1496): Quinymmo.

473 Ulm (1496): illicque.

474 Odense (1482): enitat.

475 Ulm (1496): Thurci.

476 Odense (1482): Pronectos.

21 Here Philippides resumes the narrative.

477 Ulm (1496): octo milia.

478 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

479 Ulm (1496): tiranno.

480 Odense (1482): properane.

481 Ulm (1496): thurci.

482 Ulm (1496): tota que.

483 Venice (1480): nix.

484 Ulm (1496): Thurci.

485 Odense (1482): Vicesimumoctavum capitulum. [T]urci vero iactu.

486 Venice (1480): nanque.

487 Ulm (1496): ymmo.

488 Ulm (1496): primo.

489 Ulm (1496): ascenderent.

490 Ulm (1496): eorum.

491 Ulm (1496): prestantissimus.

492 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimitorum.

493 Ulm (1496): fortissimos.

22 July 27.

23 This was Anthony d'Aubusson, the brother of Pierre d'Aubusson.

494 Ulm (1496): principis nostri iussu.

495 Ulm (1496): thurci.

496 Ulm (1496): ex templo.

497 Ulm (1496): hostem viriliter oppugnat propulsat.

498 Ulm (1496): comilitones.

499 Ulm (1496): republica.

500 Ulm (1496): rhomani.

501 Ulm (1496): rempublicam.

502 Ulm (1496): susceptis.

503 Ulm (1496): servavit & restituit.

504 Ulm (1496): Thurci.

505 Odense (1482): Vicesimunnonum capitulum. [T]urci enim perpulchre.

506 Ulm (1496): murorum.

507 Ulm (1496): Nostrorum tamen.

508 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

509 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

510 Ulm (1496): thurcorum adesse.

511 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

512 Ulm (1496): thurci.

513 Ulm (1496): ac ceduntur.

514 Ulm(l496): thurcis.

515 Ulm (1496): trucidati sunt: cadavera.

516 Ulm (1496): thurci.

517 Ulm (1496): tiranni.

518 Ulm (1496): thurci.

519 Ulm (1496): lacerata.

520 Ulm (1496): thurcis.

521 Odense (1482): Tricesimum capitulum. [F]ama satis constans.

522 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

523 Ulm (1496): &.

524 Ulm (1496): Joannis.

525 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimorum.

526 Ulm (1496): clipeum.

527 Ulm (1496): usti.

528 Odense (1482): visio terrorem.

529 Ulm (1496): ornata.

530 Ulm (1496): videretur ad narrandum.

531 Ulm (1496): & ut id potius.

532 Ulm (1496): obcecavitur.

533 Ulm (1496): suiugavit.

534 Ulm (1496): prohibuitur.

535 Odense (1482): iherosolimorum; Ulm (1496): hierosolimorum.

536 Ulm (1496): preser vavit.

537 Ulm (1496): Thurci.

538 Odense (1482): Tricesimumprimum capitulum. [T]urci enim spe.

539 Odense (1482): urbis perdita.

540 Ulm (1496): propulsantur atque vincuntur.

541 Ulm (1496): Ex templo.

542 Ulm (1496): thurci.

543 Ulm (1496): licia.

544 Ulm (1496): decessum.

545 Ulm (1496): liciam.

546 Ulm (1496): Ortos.

547 Odense (1482): presidia.

548 Ulm (1496): sique.

549 Ulm (1496): vastantes.

550 Ulm (1496): pecudum.

551 Ulm (1496): thurci.

552 Ulm (1496): dicessum.

553 Ulm (1496): thurcis.

554 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): graciis.

555 Odense (1482): eis.

556 Ulm (1496): paululum.

557 Odense (1482): abditu.

558 Odense (1482): huius.

559 Ulm (1496): nitaretur.

560 Odense (1482): vente.

561 Ulm (1496): thurcensi.

562 Ulm (1496): thurcorum.

563 Ulm (1496): viginti cum exercitu.

564 Ulm (1496): conipicientibus.

565 Ulm (1496): machinarumque.

566 Odense (1482), Ulm (1496): incomoditate.

567 Odense (1482): Tricesimumsecundum capitulum. [A]ttulerunt profecto he.

568 Ulm (1496): tollunt & laudant: deoque pro eius.

569 Ulm (1496): thurcos.

570 Ulm (1496): dicessum.

571 Ulm (1496): yndecim.

572 Ulm (1496) omits this sentence and the concluding "Laus Deo."

# Chapter 5
# Pierre d'Aubusson, *Relatio obsidionis Rhodie*

Although d'Aubusson is cited as the author of the *Relatio*, the text was probably composed within the chancery at Rhodes. The *Relatio* employs the same stylistic devices as the *Descriptio*, such as double negatives and multiple verbs to describe one action. Its military vocabulary, however, uses contemporary words, unlike Caoursin's classical terminology. There are also differences in format between the two works. The *Descriptio* is a history, and follows the conventions found in the genre: rhetorical flourishes, heroes (d'Aubusson himself), villains (Master George), and blocks of dialogue, such as the parley between the Turks and the Knights. The *Relatio* is a public letter reporting the news from the battlefront, providing a concise account of the fighting and affirming a Christian victory over the Muslims. The *Relatio* relates events of the siege that d'Aubusson, a soldier, considered most important. It omits distractions such as the parley between the Knights and the Turks, d'Aubusson's wounding, reports of miraculous intervention, and the arrival of the Sicilian relief ships. D'Aubusson attributes the Order's victory to the fierce hand-to-hand combat between the Knights and the Turks during the desperate final battle atop the walls of the Jewish quarter.

Two versions of the *Relatio* survive, one addressed to the Emperor Frederick III, and the other to Pope Sixtus IV. The letter addressed to the emperor exists in five early-printed editions, three of which were broadsides and two were codices. The letter's publication as a broadside indicates an extensive contemporary readership; the combination of the *Relatio* and an indulgence suggests that d'Aubusson's letter, like Caoursin's *Descriptio*, was reproduced to raise money for the defence of Rhodes. It should be noted, however, that broadsides were more ephemeral than codices, and that more copies survive in codex format.

The letter to the pope survives only in an early eighteenth-century imprint. Marios Philippides reprinted and translated d'Aubusson's letter to the pope, with citations to the alternate text and spelling found in the letter to the emperor. He modernized the Latin spelling of the letter to the pope, but his citations of the letter to the emperor have missing words and altered verbs. The letter to the pope is of interest, because it contains some variations and information about the Order's embassy to the papal court; its text, however,

cannot be satisfactorily established without a more contemporary copy.

This transcription is based on the Strassburg and the Cologne editions of the letter to the emperor, citing alternate text found in the letter to the pope.

Pierre d'Aubusson, *Relatio obsidionis Rhodie*; also tided *De obsidione urbis Rhodiae ad Fridericum imperatorem; Epistola Rhodiorum.*

- Broadside. Mainz: Printer of the "Darmstadt" Prognosticatio, 13 September 1480 [Gesamtkatalog 2773; ISTC No. ia01180700].
- Broadside. Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 13 September 1480 [Gesamtkatalog 2774; ISTC No. ia01180800].
- Codex. Cologne: Arnold Ther Hoernan, 13 September 1480 [Gesamtkatalog 0277220N; ISTC No. ia01180900; electronic facsimile, http://inkunabeln.ub.uni-koeln.de/vdib-info/kleioc/ia01180900].
- Codex. Strassburg: Heinrich Knoblochtzer, 13 September 1480 [Gesamtkatalog 2775; ISTC No.: ia01181000; electronic facsimile, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, http://inkunabeln.digitale-sammlungen.de/Ausgabe_A-816.html].
- Broadside. Würzburg: Georg Reyser, after 23 Mar. 1488, with Innocent VIII's *Breve*, 23 March 1488, to Raymundus Peraudi concerning the business of the Indulgence.

Latin reprints

- Sebastiano Paoli, *Codice Diplomatico*, 2 vols. (Lucca, 1737) 2:149. (Addressed to Frederick III).
- Johann Peter von Ludewig, *Reliquiae manuscriptorum omnis aevi diplomatum ac monumentoruw ineditorum adhuc* (Frankfurt, Leipzig, 1723) vol. 5, pp. 290–299. (Addressed to Sixtus IV).

English translations:

- John Taaffe, *The History of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem*, 4 vols. (London, 1852), 3:53–67.
- Marios Philippides, *Mehmed II The Conqueror*, pp. 316–333.

Italian translation:

- Emanuele F. Mizzi, *Le guerre di Rodi* (Torino, 1934): 22–33.

# Relatio obsidionis Rhodie

Pierre d'Aubusson

Serenissimo ac invictissimo principi ac domino nostro domino friderico Romanorum Imperatori semper augusto domino nobis observandissimo

## Invictissime ac serenissime princeps[1]

Que in obsidione Rohdie [sic] urbis[2] a thurcis expugnando[3] & a nobis tutando gesta sunt non incongruum[4] videtur vestre imperiali maiestati[5] significare cum ad hanc diem pugne[6] ad honorem Christiani nominis felicem aditum[7] adepte sint. Et non ambigimus vestre imperiale magestati ex victoriis[8] non parvam leticiam excepturam[9] Turci ubi circa urbem castrametati sunt oppugnationis[10] loca diligentibus[11] explorant Civitatem quoque omni exparte bombardis quatere & ervere[12] proponunt. Et quod mente concipiunt opere demonstrant. Ad id quoque exequendum bombardis et mortariis urbem[13] circumdant, verberant, diruunt turres IX.[14] Et belvardos[15] magistratus que palatia concutiunt[16] et prosternunt. Tribus tamen ex partibus commodissimum sibi esse videtur turris molis sancti Nicolai expugnacione.[17]

# Relation of the Siege of Rhodes

Pierre d'Aubusson

Most invincible and serene Prince.[1] It does not seem inappropriate to inform Your Majesty how we defended against Turkish attacks during the siege of Rhodes, now that these measures have successfully concluded this day of battle to the honor of Christ's name.[2] We do not doubt that Your Imperial Majesty will receive no small joy from these victories.[3]

After the Turks had camped around the city, they scouted sites for the siege very carefully. Their actions showed their plans for besieging it and shaking it from every direction with bombards. To this end, they surrounded the city with bombards and mortars, shattering and destroying nine towers and knocking down the boulevard running up to the Master's palace. They attacked and harassed the city from three directions, but they seemed to focus on the tower of the mole of Saint Nicholas to bring this operation to a successful conclusion.

Ex qua urbem in suam potestatem facile transituram arbitrantur. Est enim arx[18] in vertice molis sita[19] que versus septentrionem in inari prominet usque

ad portuxn[20] conspicit & aditurn navigantibus (qui eam tenent si libet) facile prohibit[21] ad occidentem oratorium Sancti Antonii situm est fere ducentis[22] passibus a turn[23] distans mari interiecto. Conspecta igitur loci oportunitate[24] hostis turris pociunde[25] avidus omni[26] conatus incumbit ut eam in suam redigat potestatem. Ad turrim itaque diruendam tres ingentes bombardas eneas devehunt qua rum magnitude & vehementia incredibilis erat saxa quoque[27] spherica ix[2S] palmarum torquebant. Easque[29] apud sacellum sancti anthonii collocant. Mirabile dictu, calamitosum[30] visu opus quidem percelebre[31] et quod stabilissimum videbatur sex diebus assiduis trecentorum[32] lapidum ictibus turris pro parte potiori[33] diruitur prosternitur laceratur. Hostis quidem[34] ruinam conspiciens exultat plausibus quoque aera complet que vana[35] gaudia in luctum suum[36] converse[37] sunt. Nos vero de tuicione turris[38] solliciti[39] grandem horendamque[40] ruinam[41] conspicientes[42] quod superat municione opplere[43] iussimus.

They thought that with this tower they could easily conquer the city. The tower is a citadel in itself, sited at the end of the mole that stretches northward into the sea up to the mouth of the harbor. Whoever held it could easily block the entrance of ships if he wanted to. To its west is the site of the chapel of St. Anthony, almost 200 paces from the tower, with the sea in between. Therefore, realizing the suitability of the tower's location, the enemy, hungry to gain control of it, strained every effort to capture it. To destroy the tower, they transported and placed at the shrine of St. Anthony three huge bronze bombards of incredible size and power that fired round stone shot nine palms in circumference. This was an illustrious deed, marvelous to relate and terrible to see, because most of the tower, which had seemed so stable, was destroyed, cast down, and demolished after a continual barrage of 300 stones for six days. The enemy exulted at seeing the ruined tower and filled the air with applause.

Their vain joy, however, was soon turned into their own destruction. Anxious for the tower's defense and now seeing it a great and horrible ruin, we ordered that what the enemy had knocked down should be thoroughly fortified.

Et quia id quoque parum visum est propter ipsius magnum lapsum constituimus ne dum[44] arcem tutari sed molem[45] ipsam sancti nicolai defendere. Omni igitur vigilancia cura et ingenio operariis fere mille die noctuque adhibibitis totis[46] diebus fossa non in cassum excisa[47] propugnaculis quoque ex lignis edificatis in vertice[48] ipsius molis circa turrim in medio quoque eius et in[49] radice turrem & molem inexpugnabilem non sine parvo sumptu reddidimus[50] presidium quoque fortissimorum commilitionum in ruina molis & munitionibus & propugnaculis circa earn confectis collocamus in radice quoque ac pede eius molis altera presidia ad orientem & occidentem

collocamus. Nam illic radix muro clauditur & mare vadosum est quare observatur defenditurque ne turci illuc transeant[51] & nostras a tergo adorientur. In menibus urbis bombardis disponi iubemus que ad tempus pugne officio fungantur. Ignes quoque[52] cum scaphis[53] parantur que in classem mittantur[54] Turci edificii ruina allecti unum[55] et demum altera prelio turrim invadunt primum cum ipsam facile expugnare putarent mediocribus viribus aggrediuntur ante auroram lucem[56] ad hue dubia triremibus ad hoc paratis arcem oppugnant plianturque nostri quedem turcioni[57] intend locum constanter tutantur. Sic hostis victus discedit. Ea in pugna fere septingenti[58] turci (prout profuge significavere[59]) cecidere. Interiectis autem diebus actensi[60] priori repulsa turrim maori[61] potencia[62] arte & ingenio oppugnant & reperamenta[63] ac propugnacula iactu bombardarum quaciunt nonnullaque[64] conterunt. Because this hardly seemed possible due to the tower's massive collapse, we decided not only to protect the citadel, but also to defend the mole of St. Nicholas itself Therefore, with vigilance, care, and ingenuity, employing almost one thousand men working day and night, by morning we cut a trench – not in vain – after which we built a wooden rampart at the head of the mole around the tower in between it and the base, making the tower and the mole impregnable at no small cost. We then stationed a garrison of the strongest knights in the ruins on the mole; having finished the fortifications and bulwarks around it, we arranged another garrison facing east and west at the foundations and at the foot of the mole. Indeed, the defenses ended there at the foot of the wall and the sea was shallow at this point. Therefore, the site was scouted and defended so the Turks could not cross and attack our forces from behind. We ordered that bombards be set up on the city walls and these would operate throughout the entire battle. Fire was prepared from sulfur and then shot into the enemy fleet. The Turks, focusing on the ruined building, made one attack after another against the tower. Since they initially thought they could easily overrun this position, they attacked with weak units from before dawn until two o'clock. After preparing their galleys, they attacked and assaulted the citadel. Our men, intent on defense, manfully protected the position. Thus the defeated enemy withdrew. The deserters reported that some seventy Turks were killed in this skirmish. After a few days had passed, the Turks, infuriated by being driven back earlier, attacked the great tower with renewed force, skill, and spirit. They shook the ramparts and fortresses with bombard barrages and slaughtered some of our men. Nos quoque[65] reficimus summa celeritate quod obteritur parant ad hec conficienda triremes[66] bene munitas et ingeniose ad prelium ornatas.[67]

Adiciunt & navigia[68] quedam oneraria parendarias vulgo dictas quarum quedam onuste bombardis et saxis erant ut locum turris & molis que[69] se potituros credebant munirent & ex hiis urbem lacesserent diruerent[70]

oppugnarentque.[71] Cymbas[72] preterea quasdam disponunt ex quibus quique turcorum strenuissimi facile in molem descendant.[73] Et pontexn rniro artificonis edificant que ex ecclesia sancti anthonii turris[74] in molem transitum prebeat.[75] Nos enim suspicati quod evenit pius prima in habundancius[76] dies noctesque circa turris et molis tutamentis[77] vires & ingenium adhibemus munimenta ampliamus presidia augemus gravissimis ipsis[78] non parcimus. Nam & in ea salutem urbis constitutam coniiciebamus.[79] Media igitur nocte grandiori accensi[80] ardore turci xiii kal. Iulii.[81] Arcem summo silencio aggrediuntur omnique parte[82] magno impetu invadunt erecte[83] enim erant nostrorum aures nec dormitabant. Ubi autem adesse inimicos comperitur. Machine saxa iaciunt milites gladio[84] stringuntur[85] balistis fundis & saxorum iactu ex turri et mole hostem deturbant[86] & propellunt pugnatum est summa vi a media nocte usque ad horam decimam. Turci vero conpleres[87] qui ex cinibus[88] & triremibus in molem descenderant[89] trucidantur We very quickly repaired what was destroyed.

To carry out their plans, they readied thirty galleys that were well-fortified and ingeniously armed for battle. They added to these certain cargo ships, called *parandarias* in the vernacular, which they loaded with bombards and shot so they could fortify the site of the tower and mole when they captured it, for from there they could pulverize, destroy, and overrun the city. They distributed skiffs which allowed five of the strongest Turks to cross easily to the mole. With marvelous skill, they built a bridge over which they could cross from the Church of St. Anthony to the tower on the mole. After the first battle, we thoroughly understood what had happened. Day and night, we applied all of our strength and skill to the defense of the area around the tower and mole; we expanded the fortifications, increased the garrisons, and did not neglect the most serious matters. We imposed on ourselves the duty of establishing the city's safety. In the middle of the night on June 13, the Turks, inflamed with a desire to fight, approached the citadel in complete silence and then with a great charge attacked from all sides. Our men had not slept but strained their ears to hear. When it was discovered that the enemy was approaching, soldiers fired stones from guns, drew their swords, and loaded their crossbows with bolts. Stones were fired from the tower, and they drove the enemy from the mole. The battle was fought with tremendous force from midnight until ten the following morning. A great number of the Turks who had disembarked from the skiffs and galleys on the mole were cut down. pons natans turcis onustus machinarum iactu[90] frangitur que supererant[91] turci merguntur. Quatuor quoque triremes & ea navigia que bombardis & lapidibus onusta erant saxorum iactu[92] ex tormentis perfringuntur & undis obruuntur.

Ignis quoque in classem mittitur que earn retrocedere conpulit[93] sic discedunt victi turci. Insignis quidam hec pugna fuit morte clarorum virorum

que turcis preerant quorum interitus luctum exercitui prebuit perfugi quoque post pugnarn introducti affirmant. Turcos in hac pugna[94] magnam[95] stragem accepisse ex eis quoque[96] fere duo milia quingentos cecidisse. Cum autern turci spem turris expugnande perdidissent. Industriam ingenium vires & omnem conatum ad urbem expugnandum[97] convertunt. Et licet tota civitas machinis concuteretur et laceraretur ut vix forma prioris urbis remanserit tamen potissime[98] murorum[99] partem oppugnare intendunt que iudeorum domos claudunt orientemque spectant. Eamque etiam partem que ad turrim ytalie[100] ducitur. Ad hec igitur menia diruenda & dilaceranda octo[101] ingentes grandissimasque bombardas comportant. Saxa circuitus palmarum ix torquentes que assiduo dies[102] noctuque muros verberant.[103] Nec cessant bombarde & mortaria circa civitatem locata similes lapides torquere quinymo ad terrorem & detrimentum iactus[104] multiplicant. Nos ad iactum mortariorum vitandum imbecillem[105] etatem ac mulieres sub fornicibus & valvis & pluribus locis pomerii cohabitare statuimus quo effectum est ut pauci hoc tormento interirent.[106] Usi sunt quoque[107] alio tormenti genere quo igneas pilas proiciebant ac sagittas ignitas ex balistas & catapultis torquent quo ignem in edificia iacerent.[108] Nos vero indemnitati urbis consulentes[109] peritos artis A floating bridge loaded down with Turks was demolished by artillery fire and those on top of it were plunged into the sea. Four of the galleys and the ships that had been loaded with bombards and stones were shattered by the barrage of stones and sank beneath the waves.

Also, the fire that had been hurled into the fleet compelled the defeated Turks to withdraw. During this glorious battle, some of the great men who commanded the Turks died and their death caused all of the army to mourn. Deserters brought within our lines after the battle claimed that the Turks had suffered a great massacre in the battle and that approximately 2,500 of their troops had been killed. Moreover, since the Turks had now lost hope of overrunning the tower, they directed all their energy, talent, strength, and effort into attacking the city. Even though the entire city had been so shaken and demolished by artillery that it scarcely remained a shadow of its former self, the Turks nevertheless decided to attack the strongest section of walls which enclosed the homes of the Jews and faced eastward. They also planned to attack that part of the walls that led to the Tower of Italy. They moved eight enormous and very powerful bombards that fired round stones nine palms in circumference toward them to demolish the walls and tear them to pieces. The bombards and mortars located around the city never stopped firing similar-sized stones, indeed increasing the damage and panic by this barrage. To avoid the mortar barrage, we ordered that the young and the women be sheltered under arches with thick doors and in other places in the cleared zone near the walls. This was done so that few would die from this barrage. The Turks also

used another type of engine that hurled burning stakes, and shot burning arrows from crossbows and catapults to set fire to the buildings of the city. But we asked advice on how to safeguard the city, and we chose persons delegimus[110] que post casum pilarum magna solercia[111] ignem extinguerent his[112] remediis rhodii a magnis incommodis servati sunt.

Excogitant insuper impii[113] urbem ingenio occulto propinquere[114] fossas itaque tortuosas effodiunt quis[115] partire[116] lignis[117] & terra operiunt ut latenter ad fossas urbis accedant propugnacula quoque multis in locis edificant ex quibus assiduo sagittant colubrinis[118] ac serpentinis bombardis[119] nostras deturbant fatigantque pensitant quoque[120] & eis esse commodum[121] aliquem[122] partem civitatis[123] que muro speronis[124] adiacet complere. Opera itaque[125] ab hoste adhibita lapides[126] congerere[127] non cessant & occulto in fossam iaciunt assiduitate pars fosse oppletur antemurali quoque equatur ex quo et ruina in formam dorsi[128] redacta facilimus[129] conscensus in menia efficitur. Nos enim[130] inimici conatum conspicientes[131] tuitioni urbis invigilamus totaque[132] urbe & castello reparatis & municionibus[133] fossis quoque[134] quam diligenter[135] intendimus. Quod turci coniectantes desperati admuros iudeorum & alio seconvertunt & nos munimentis ac reparis[136] experienced in fighting fires, to extinguish, with great skill, the flames where the burning stakes fell to earth. These measures saved the Rhodians from great disasters.

Moreover, the impious [Turks] devised a plan to attack the city with their skill of concealment. They dug twisting trenches which they screened off with hurdles and earth so they could secretly advance on the city's ditches. They also built ramparts from which they continually harassed and harried our men by shooting arrows, coleuvrines, and serpentines. They decided to fill the ditch adjacent to the spur of the wall, and therefore incessantly gathered stones and secretly threw them into the ditch. By their persistence, part of the trench was filled in and made level with the rampart. They could very easily ascend our walls from the top of this mound of rubble. Seeing this enemy effort, we supervised the defense of the entire city, the repair of the castle, and the fortification of the trench. We took great pains so the Turks, who were desperately hurling themselves against the walls of the Jews, would be diverted elsewhere. With the strongest fortifications and redoubts, validissimis ruinam turcorum[137] firmamus palis[138] lignorum vivacissimorum[139] infixis ac terra[140] fascibus arbustorum & ramorum interiectis quo invicem subtilissime firmissimeque coherentes vim machinarum sustinebant & ruinam protegebant ne muri collapsi intra urbem facilem descensum preberent.[141]

Etiam loco propugnaculorum palos & vegetes terra oppletas[142] statuimus que nostras tutarentur & conscendentibus turcis[143] impedimento essent. Ignes quoque artificiosos et alia ingenia paravimus[144] que ad propulsandam turcorum vim conducere videbantur. Excogitatum quoque est earn partem

fosse que lapidibus a turcis oppleta erat evacuare. Sed cum id palam effici non posset cuniculo latentique[145] fossa in pomerio edificata exitum sub lapidibus nostri habent et occulto lapides in urbem comportant. Sentiunt[146] profecto turci que fosse propinqui erant lapidum congeriem minui & ascensus oportunitatem adimi nisi quantocius[147] quod cupiunt efficiant. Itaque his[148] in operibus octo & triginta[149] diebus consumptis quo in tempore tria milia[150] quingenta[151] vel circiter ingentium[152] saxorum globi in menia[153] & urbem iacti sunt Turci[154] occasione[155] invadende urbis conspecta[156] ne ascensus conmoditas auferretur[157] accelerant propositum conficere pridie quam[158] bellum[159] iniretur ac sequenti nocte & diluculo quod mane quo pugnatum est we bolstered the ruined wall by driving sharpened wooden stakes in the ground and steadying them by wedging in between bundles of branches and limbs. These, which were skillfully and powerfully held together, withstood the force of enemy guns and protected the ruined wall so its collapse would not offer an easy descent into the city.

Also, we erected defenses of wood, wicker, and wine casks filled with earth that protected our people and hindered the Turks. We also prepared flame-throwing machines and other devices that apparently led to the expulsion of the Turkish forces. We devised how to empty the trench that the Turks had filled with stones. But since this could not be done openly, our men had dug a tunnel from the trench into our cleared zone under the stones; then, they secretly carried the rocks into the city. As they approached the trench, the Turks perceived that the mass of stones was diminishing and that they should make an assault immediately or lose the opportunity. Therefore, after working at this for thirty-eight days (during which time their guns discharged approximately 3,500 stone shot into the middle of the city), the Turks had to speed up their plans to avoid losing the chance to enter the city and finish the siege. The battle began in the morning and was fought through the following night until dawn and the morning of the next day when it was broken off. precesserat[160] octo[161] bombarde dictis muris obiecte absque intermissione saxa ingcncia[162] torquent quod loco propugnaculorum adhibitum erat dilacerant diruunt[163] vigiles & custodes & menium presidia pro parte pociori occidunt ut quisquem vix muris superstare[164] posset[165] nisi summo astu occultaretur & scala[166] ad signurn campane paululum descenderent[167] & demum conscenderent.[168]

Nec tempus datum est propugnacula denuo instaurandi cum semper ictus bombardarum augerentur ut eo pauco tempore CCC[169] vel circiter saxa iacta sint. Turci vero iactuum[170] bombardarum finito ad signum iactus mortarii quod pridern in eo[171] loco constituerant confertissimi magno impetu quam celerrime septio[172] kalendas[173] augusti conscendunt. Erat namque facit (ut diximus eis) conscensus[174] facilius[175] quam nostris per scalas.[176] Superiora

quoque murorum loco radicato[177] nostro quod[178] illic erat presidio quod[179] primum[180] tanto impetu[181] resistere nequivit antequam subsidia nostra scalas[182] conscenderent[183] occupant.[184] Et illic vexilla sua statuunt.[185] Idem quoque faciunt ad turrem ytalie[186] cuius verticem oppugnant.[187] Clamor undique oritur manus quoque viriliter As their eight bombards fired, their guns discharged stones without pause, demolishing and destroying the targeted section of the ramparts. They also killed so many of the watchmen, guards, and garrison of the walls that one could scarcely climb up on the walls unless hidden by a very high upper wall and they climbed up and down the ladder at the signal of a little bell.

Nor was there any time to again repair the ramparts since the bombard fire was constantly increasing, so much so that in a very short time approximately three hundred stones were discharged. On August 1, the bombardment ended with the pre-arranged signal of mortar fire, and the Turks rapidly rushed into that space in a closely-packed formation. For, as we have said, this ascent was easier than ours on the ladders. After the slaughter of our troops who stood as the garrison on the higher positions of the wall, our men initially were not able to hold back such a tremendous enemy attack until our reserves climbed the ladders, occupied the high ground, and there planted their banners. Our men did the same at the Tower of Italy, attacking at its base. A great cry arose from all sides, and our men fought conseritur[188] magnaque[189] vi pugnatur. Repente nostri[190] hosti se obiicientibus[191] dextera levaque murorum[192] superioribus locis nostri hostem[193] oppugnant[194] et valide[195] deturbant ne menia discurrerent.[196]

Scalis[197] quoque que quatuor erant quibus in vicum iudeorum descendebatur una iussu nostro prcfracta[198] conscensis hosti nos opponimus[199] tutamur defendimus. Turci vero prepulcre armati duo milia supra[200] muros erant confertissimi de nostris secum manus[201] conferentes[202] que[203] armorum vim[204] propellere & loco expellere intebantur.[205] Sed nostrorum vetus[206] firma persistens nequaquam loco cessit. Sequebatur vero se[207] turcos qui muris positi erant[208] ingens[209] multitudo turcorum[210] que totum campum adiacentem ruinam vallum & fossam oppleverat[211] ut terra vix conspici posset. Affimarunt profuge IIII M[212] turcorum invasioni adesse. Nostri ex turcis que super muro erant trecentos[213] vel circiter in vicum iudeorm propellunt qui ad unum occisi sunt. Eo in conflictu[214] vexillum imaginis[215] sacratissime[216] domini nostri iesu a courageous battle with great violence. After our forces had suddenly hurled themselves against the enemy, our light-armed troops on the right fought among the ranks of the enemy on the higher sections of the wall and drove them back so they could not overrun the walls.

There were also four ladders that led down into the district of the Jews. With a single command from us, our men broke these to pieces and prevented,

guarded against, and defended against the enemy using these. Indeed, two thousand of the well-armored Turks were closely crowded on top of the walls; they intended by the great strength of the weapons they carried with them to forcefully drive back our troops and expel them from that position. But our men, standing firm, gave no ground at all. Indeed, they pursued the Turks who had taken control of the walls. Such a huge multitude of Turks had filled the entire field next to the ruined palisade and trench that one could scarcely see the ground. Deserters affirmed that 4,000 Turks had taken part in the attack. Our men drove approximately 300 of the Turks who were on top of the walls over into the district of the Jews, where they were killed down to the last man. In the sight of the enemy, we raised the standard of the image of our lord Jesus Christ Christi & religionis nostre ante hostis conspectum ereximus[217] summa itaque vi horis duabus pugnatum est. Tandem turci pressi fatigati perterriti vulneribus quoque[218] fossi[219] terga vertunt et fugam tanto impetu arripiunt ut sibi ipsis impedimento essent & perniciem afferrent. Cecidere ea in pugna turci[220] tria milia quingenti vel circiter quorum cadavera intra urbem &[221] super menia & in fossa municionibus hostium & mari reperta sunt & post modum adlucem[222] vitandam conbusta quorum spoliis nostri potiti fuere qui fugientes turcos usque ad campi planiciem magno animo secuti[223] eos trucidantes tandem incoliimes[224] ingressi sunt.

In prelio quidem ex nostris militibus et baliuis[225] inter confertissimos hostes constanter pugnantes occubuere. Nos[226] nostrique commilitones pluribus vulneribus acceptis deo gratias acturi. Vulnera quoque[227] presidio valido muris imposito domum revertimur.[228] Nec id[229] profecto sine divino auxilio contigit qui tantam cladem a nostris[230] avertit.[231] Misit enim deus non ambigimus de celo auxilium ne plebicula Christum colens machmetis[232] spurcitiis[233] inliceretur. Paraverunt[234] turci spe potiunde urbis sibi[235] funes ad captivos alligandos[236] et palorum[237] ingentem magnitudinem[238] ad vivos cruciandos. Decrerant[239] enim omnes mortales mares[240] et feminas supra and of our religion. The two sides had fought with all their might for two hours. At last, the Turks, hard pressed, harassed, terrified, and badly wounded, turned tail and fled in such a rush that they got in their own way and constituted a danger to themselves and their troops. Approximately 3,500 Turks were killed in this battle and their corpses were found inside the city, on the walls, in the trench, within their own fortifications, and in the sea.[4] After the bodies were burnt to avoid plague, our men confiscated the enemy booty. Those of our troops who with great spirit had chased the fleeing Turks into the flat field finally came back into the city after slaughtering them.

In this battle, some of our knights and bailiffs, steadfastly fighting in the midst of the closely-packed enemy were killed. Those of us who were wounded gave thanks to God and tended our wounds. After a strong garrison was

posted on the walls and our troops returned, it seemed that these events had occurred with divine aid that shielded us from such great destruction. God, not doubtful in his zeal, sent this help so the common people who worship Christ should not be deceived by the superstitious Mohammedans. With hopes of capturing the city, the Turks had prepared many ropes to tie up captives and had ordered that sharpened stakes be made to impale them alive. Indeed, had we not saved the city from Turkish control, they would have killed all the men, slaughtered all decern[241] annorum etatem trucidare et palis[242] suffugere[243] teneriorisque etatis mortales in captivitatem ducere. Et ad fidem abnegandam compellere. Et omnem[244] supellectilem in predam convertere[245] urbis dicione turco reservata. Sed frustrati suo nephando optatu tanquam pecudes ceduntur.[246] His in pugnis et eruptionibus[247] diversis[248] diebus factis ut appropinquationem prohiberemus et fossam evacuaremus et ageremus quod civitati commodum esset. Etiam[249] machinarum iactu in exercitum et viridaria que incolebant ut[250] perfugi[251] divulgaverunt turci.

Novem[252] milia occisi sunt. Ingens quidem multitudo vulnerata inter quos quidam capitanei ac germanus basse et quidam turci gener occubuere pugna commissa munimentis prius exustis ad primum[253] lapidem castra turci locarent ubi supellectili impedirnentis[254] ac machinis[255] onerandis[256] ac turcis[257] in liciam[258] revehendis[259] non nullis diebus consumptis Rhodiorum litore[260] solventes fiscum continentem[261] urbem antiquam navigant. Sic quoque victi cum ignominia recedunt.

the women over ten (impaling them all on stakes), sent into slavery everyone of a tender age, compelled them to abjure their faith, and plundered all the booty of the ruined city. But they were frustrated in their nefarious desire and were killed like swine. We carried out these battles and raids for two days so we could block the approach of the enemy and dig out the trench; we then did what was necessary for the city. Also, the guns continued firing into their army and their camp so that their refuge was destroyed.

Nine thousand were killed. Large numbers of them were wounded, even their captains and the brother of the Pasha; and the son-in-law of the Turk lay among the dead. After engaging in battle and then withdrawing from their fortifications, the Turks pitched camp at the first mile stone. When they had spent several days loading equipment, guns, ordinance, and Turks on their ships and ferrying all of this back to Lycia, they sailed along the Rhodian shore to the region near the ancient city of Physkos. Thus, they returned beaten and in shame.

Omnipotensdeusvestram Impe. Ma. feliciter conservetadvota.[262] Datum[263] Rhodi. Die decima tercia[264] mensis[265] septembris. Anno redemptoris nostri incarnationis[266] Millesimo quadringentisimo octogesimo[267]

E.V. Imperi M.

Humiles servitores Petrus Danbussen. Mayster hostialis hierosolomitam et consulum.

May the Omnipotent God safeguard Your Imperial Majesty's welfare,[5] Issued at Rhodes on September 13 in the year of the incarnation of Our Redeemer 1480.

Your Imperial majesty's humble servants, Pierre d'Aubusson, Master of the Hospital of Jerusalem, and council.

1 Papal letter: Baetissima pater, post pedum oscula baetorum.

2 Papal letter: urbis Rohdie [sic].

3 Omitted from papal letter.

4 Papal letter: non indecens.

5 Papal letter: S[anctitate] V[estre].

6 Papal letter: pugna.

7 Papal letter: exitum.

8 Papal letter: adepte…victoriis omitted from papal letter.

9 Papal letter: leticiam concepturam cuius subsidiis & favore quicquid aggredimur efficimus, speramusque divina favente clementia auxiliisque V[estra] R[everentia] adiutos victoriam de hoste reportaturos.

10 Strassburg edition: oppungnacionis [sic].

11 Papal letter: diligencius.

12 Papal letter: diruere.

13 Papal letter: muros.

14 Papal letter: &.

15 Papal letter: Belonardos; Strassburg: bolwardorum.

16 Papal letter: concurrant.

17 Papal letter: expugnatura; Cologne edition: expugnatio.

1 Papal letter: Most Holy Father, after kissing your blessed feet.

2 Papal letter: It does not seem unworthy to inform Your Holiness of what happened in the siege of the city of Rhodes and how it was protected by us.

3 Papal letter: of whose help and support whatsoever we have accomplished and We hope what we are about to report finds favor with your reverence, whose mercy and help encouraged the victory over the enemy.

18 Papal letter: arx ipsa.

19 Papal letter: posita.

20 Papal letter: Eosque portus.

21 Papal letter: prohibent.

22 Papal letter: CC.

23 Papal letter: turre.

24 Papal letter: opportunitate.

25 Papal letter: pociunde turris.

26 Papal letter: cum.

27 Strassberg: quodque.

28 Papal letter: novem.

29 Papal letter: easquoque.

30 Strassburg edition: calamicosum.

31 Papal letter: precelebre.

32 Papal letter: CCCtis.

33 Papal letter: pro parte pociori; Strassburg edition, propociori perte.

34 Omitted from papal letter.

35 Papal letter: bona.

36 Papal letter: suum lutum.

37 Papal letter: commissa.

38 Papal letter: turris tuicione.

39 Papal letter: soliciti.

40 Papal letter: horrendamque.

41 Papal letter: eius ruinam.

42 Papal letter: adspicientes.

43 Papal letter: oplere.

44 Papal letter: nedum.

45 Papal letter: ne molem.

46 Papal letter: his.

47 Papal letter: in cantibus exorsa; Cologne edition, fossa in cautibus excise.

48 Papal letter: inverticem.

49 Omitted from papal letter.

50 Strassburg edition: reclusimus non.

51 Papal letter: illic transirent.

52 Papal letter: ignesque.

53 Papal letter: sulphuris; Strassburg edition, staphis.

54 Papal letter: mittuntur.

55 Papal letter, Cologne edition: uno.

56 Papal letter, Cologne edition: luce.

57 Cologne edition: tuicioni.

58 Papal letter: VII; Cologne edition: dcc.

59 Cologne edition: significare.

60 Cologne edition: accensi.

61 Strassburg edition: mari.

62 Cologne edition: potentia.

63 Papal letter: raparatoria; Cologne edition: repara.

64 Papal letter: nonnullosque.

65 Papal letter: nosque.

66 Papal letter: triremes XXX.

67 Papal letter: armatas.

68 Papal letter: magna.

69 Papal letter: qua.

70 Papal letter: dirruerant.

71 Strassburg edition: expugnarentque.

72 Papal letter: cimbasque.

73 Papal letter: transitum prebent.

74 Cologne edition: turcis.

75 Omitted from papal letter.

76 Papal letter: post primam pugnam suspicati quod evenit habundantius.

77 Cologne edition: tutamen.

78 Omitted from papal letter. Cologne edition: impensis.

79 Papal letter: consciebamus; Strassburg edition: couiiciebamus.

80 Strassburg edition: actensi.

81 Papal letter: XIII die Iulii.

82 Papal letter: ex parte.

83 Papal letter: Arrecte.

84 Papal letter: gladiis. Cologne edition: gladios.

85 Papal letter, Cologne edition: stringunt.

86 Papal letter: disturbent.

87 Papal letter: quamplures.

88 Papal letter: cimbis; Cologne edition: cymbus.

89 Papal letter: descenderant in molem.

90 Papal letter: actu machinarum.

91 Papal letter: supererant.

92 Papal letter: iactu saxorum.

93 Papal letter: compellit; Strassburg edition: conpu.

94 Papal letter: hac in pugna.

95 Cologne edition: grandem.

96 Papal letter: quove.

97 Cologne edition: oppugnandam.

98 Papal letter: potissimam.

99 Strassburg edition: "tamen potissime minorum" printed twice.

100 Papal letter: Italie.

101 Papal letter: VIII.

102 Cologne edition, Papal letter: die.

103 Papal letter: verberant muros.

104 Strassburg edition: ictus.

105 Strassburg edition: inbecillem.

106 Papal letter: interierint.

107 Cologne edition, papal letter: Usi quoque sunt.

108 Papal letter: iniecerunt.

109 Papal letter: consulendi.

110 Papal letter: deligimus.

111 Cologne edition: solertia.

112 Strassburg edition: hys.

113 Papal letter: impii turci.

114 Papal letter: propugnare.

115 Papal letter: quas.

116 Cologne edition: partime.

117 Papal letter: viminibus.

118 Cologne edition: sagittant et colubrinis.

119 Cologne edition: "bombardis" omitted.

120 Omitted from papal letter.

121 Papal letter: commodissimum.

122 Cologne edition, papal letter: aliquam.

123 Papal letter: fosse civitatis.

124 Papal letter: Spectionis.

125 Strassburg edition: igitur.

126 Papal letter: lapidibus.

127 Papal letter: congeriem.

128 Papal letter: in dorsi formam.

129 Cologne edition: facillimus.

130 Strassburg edition: autem.

131 Papal letter: inspicientes.

132 Papal letter: tociusque.

133 Cologne edition: castello et reperatis et munitionibus; papal letter: castelli reparacioni & municioni.

134 Papal letter: que.

135 Papal letter: diligenterque.

136 Papal letter: reparationibus.

137 Papal letter: murorum.

138 Strassburg edition: palus.

139 Papal letter: umatissimorum.

140 Cologne edition, papal letter: terra tenaci.

141 Cologne edition: sentence continues "que a parte urbis nisi in scalis conscendi potuerunt licet a parte exteriori ruina facilem ascensum perteret."

142 Papal letter: repletos.

143 Papal letter: turchis,

144 Papal letter: paramus.

145 Papal letter: latente. l46 Strassburg edition: Senciunt.

147 Papal letter: quam cicius.

148 Strassburg edition: hys.

149 Cologne edition: xxx.

150 Papal letter: milium.

151 Papal letter: V.

152 Papal letter: invencium.

153 Strassburg edition: media.

154 Strassburg edition: Turci sed.

155 Papal letter: racione.

156 Papal letter: spectata.

157 Cologne edition: auferetur.

158 Strassburg edition: pridieque quam.

159 Papal letter: prelium.

160 Papal letter: precessit.

161 Papal letter: VIII.

162 Cologne edition: ingentia.

163 Cologne edition: dilacerant et diruunt.

164 Papal letter: superstare muris.

165 Papal letter: possit.

166 Cologne edition: scalas; papal letter: scallas.

167 Papal letter: descenderet.

168 Papal letter: conscenderet.

169 Papal letter: III.

170 Cologne edition, papal letter: iactu.

171 Cologne edition: eo in.

172 Cologne edition: v.

173 Papal letter: quinto die.

174 Papal letter: ascensus.

175 Papal letter: facilior.

176 Papal letter: scallas.

177 Cologne edition, papal letter: trucidato.

178 Papal letter: quo.

179 Papal letter: quo.

180 Papal letter: primo.

181 Papal letter: tan turn impetui.

182 Papal letter: scallas.

183 Papal letter: conscenderant.

184 Papal letter: occupavit.

185 Papal letter: statuit.

186 Papal letter: Italie.

187 Papal letter: expugnant.

188 Papal letter: conserit.

189 Papal letter: magna quoque.

190 Cologne edition: nostris.

191 Papal letter: nostri se obiicientibus hosti.

192 Papal letter: in murorum.

193 Omitted from papal letter.

194 Papal letter: impugnant.

195 Papal letter: valde.

196 Papal letter: discurrerant.

197 Papal letter: scalle.

198 Papal letter: perfracte.

199 Papal letter: obiicimus.

200 Cologne edition: super.

201 Cologne edition: manum.

202 Papal letter: qui secum magnam conferentiam.

203 Omitted from Cologne edition.

204 Cologne edition, papal letter: vi.

205 Cologne edition: nitebantur.

206 Papal letter: turba.

207 Cologne edition: quoque.

208 Cologne edition: muris potiti erant; papal letter: muros potiti erant.

209 Papal letter: ingens quoque.

210 Cologne edition: turcorum multitudo; papal letter: turchorum.

211 Papal letter: appleverat.

212 Cologne edition: xl milia.

213 Cologne edition, papal letter: CCC.

214 Omitted from papal letter.

215 Strassburg edition: ymaginis.

216 Papal letter: sanctissime.

217 Papal letter: vexillum…erereximus. Nostri.

218 Omitted from papal letter.

219 Papal letter: confossi.

220 Omitted from papal letter.

221 Cologne edition, papal letter: ac.

222 Papal letter: luem.

223 Papal letter: sequuti.

224 Papal letter: incolumes urbem.

225 Papal letter: quam plurimi; Cologne edition: baiuliuis.

226 Omitted from papal letter.

227 Cologne edition, papal letter: que curaturi.

228 Papal letter: revertuntur.

229 Papal letter: ne quid.

230 Cologne edition: nobis.

231 Papal letter: vertit.

232 Papal letter: mahometis; Cologne edition: mahometice.

233 Papal letter: spurciciis.

234 Papal letter: Paraverantque.

235 Papal letter: plures.

236 Papal letter: pallorum.

237 Papal letter: pallorum.

238 Cologne edition, papal letter: multitudinem.

239 Cologne edition: Decreverant.

240 Papal letter: &.

4 This figure agrees with Caoursin's account of the number of Turkish losses in this one attack. With the additional information that the Turks had deployed 4,000 men to capture this section of the wall, it would seem that the defenders of Rhodes killed 88 percent of the attackers – a remarkable feat, considering that the Turks held the high ground during this action.

241 Papal letter: X.

242 Papal letter: pallis,

243 Papal letter: suffigere.

244 Papal letter: & ruine.

245 Papal letter: comittere.

246 Papal letter: occiduntur.

247 Papal letter: cinctionibus.

248 Papal letter: duobus.

249 Omitted from Cologne.

250 Cologne edition, papal letter: prout.

251 Papal letter: profuge.

252 Cologne edition: ix.

253 Cologne edition: proximum.

254 The papal letter replaced "munimentis…impedimentis" with "templo turci remotis castrametantur."

255 Papal letter: machinas.

256 Papal letter: quoque.

257 Papal letter: turcos qui ex.

258 Papal letter: licia.

259 Papal letter: transerant.

260 Cologne edition: littore.

261 Cologne edition: continentis.

262 The papal letter replaced "non nulla…vota" with "cum omni supellectili phiscum antiquam continentis urbem devehunt, viridaria, agros, vineas ac predia vastant depopulantur & incendunt omne pecus fere abigunt. His peractis litteri accedunt & transfretant ubi XI dies stacionem habentes cum iactura multa & ignominia ad domesticos lares revertuntur. Quemadmodum diffusius V. .X. explicabunt magnificus ac percellens miles Anthonius dominus de Montelio ad vicecomitem primanus noster ac venerandi fratres. Venture de Tuatuonibus prior Capuc. & Diomedes de Villargut preceptopr daliaga, locum tenens venerandi Seneschalli omnes nostri quibus commisimus explicanda, V.S.

nomine nostro supplicant, ut in dicendis fidem & agendis votivam expeditionem potens Deus V.S. flicker conservet."

263 Omitted from Cologne.

264 Papal letter: XV.

265 Omitted from papal letter.

266 Omitted from papal letter.

267 Cologne edition: Septembris Datum Anno m c lxxx. Explicit Epistola Rhodiorum ad serenissimum principes dominum Fredericum imperatorem semper Augustum.

5 Papal letter: "After remaining there for 11 days, they finally returned to their households with many sacrifices and much shame.

Just as was so widely explained to Your Holiness, the magnificent and distinguished knight, Anthony, Lord of Monthélie, our cousin, and the venerable Ventura Fanconi, Prior of Capua, and Diomedes de Vilaragut, preceptor of Aliaga, lieutenant and all our venerable seneschals, to whom we have entrusted several things to explain to Your Holiness and to supplicate in our name that it would seem fitting to Your Holiness in speaking for the faith and in carrying out the wished-for expedition. May the Almighty God keep you happily."

# Chapter 6
# *John Kay, Description of the Siege of Rhodes*

John Kay's translation of Caoursin's *Descriptio* was first published in 1482 or early 1483 by a London printer known to posterity as "The Printer of the Siege of Rhodes."[1] John Kay was as obscure as his printer; despite his self-identification as Edward IV's poet, there are no other surviving works attributed to him.[2] Kay may have hoped for patronage that never materialized after Edward's death in 1483. His *Description,* however, survived. Fragments of the work are found in at least two manuscripts, suggesting that it circulated among an English-speaking readership.[3] Kay's translation was not reprinted again until 1870, when A. Murray included it in his edition of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* as an historical text.[4] H. W. Fincham edited a new edition of Kay's translation in 1926 with modernized spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary.[5] More recently, Kay's work has become available through facsimile, microfilm, and now digital editions of early English printed books.[6]

Kay, like the authors of other English translations during the period, translated for the sense of the text, not the exact meaning.[7] In the process, he made some significant emendations and presented his own interpretation of events. A direct comparison of Kay's translation with Caoursin's Latin original reveals numerous inconsistencies between the two, most notably, long sections where Kay inserted original commentary and interpretation. Kay altered Caoursin's narrative, omitting some portions, inserting others, and interpolating additional information seamlessly into the text. Malcolm Hebron compared Caoursin's and Kay's versions of the siege, and concluded that Kay's translation was a literary rendition of the Latin text, written to entertain an audience that lacked interest in Caoursin's dry, factual record.[8] Thea Summerfield agrees that Kay wrote a lively account using a literary style that was then very fashionable.[9] Certainly Kay expanded upon Caoursin's concise Latin vocabulary, but the types of changes Kay made to the Latin text show that his work was not limited to literary embellishment alone.

Kay relied not only upon Caoursin for information but also upon other sources for style and subtance. He named as inspirations Cardinal Bessarion's Latin letter on the fall of Constantinople and Balthasar's Italian work on the taking of Negroponte. These influences also might have included the letters

Cardinal Bessarion wrote urging the Christian princes to take action after the capture of Negroponte.[10] Kay could have found all his texts in Breydenbach, which would support a later date for the publication of his translation. The English author might have been familiar with printed works by Pius II (Aeneas Piccolomini) such as *De captione urbis Constantinopolitanae* (Rome, 1470, 1474) and the famous *Epistola ad Mahumnetem,* which appeared in many editions throughout Europe; the *Epistolae magni Turci,* attributed to Mehmet II, but composed by Laudivius Zacchia; and, possibly, some of the magisterial bulls from Rhodes itself. He might even have known of the ephemera produced immediately after the event, including a printed sheet listing the miracles that happened in Rhodes during the siege.[11]

Kay presented a different process of causation and context for the siege of Rhodes from Caoursin. According to Caoursin, the siege of Rhodes was inevitable once Mehmet II had taken Constantinople, because the sultan could not subjugate the Knights. He described the attempts of the Turks to force the Knights to pay tribute, and ascribed the immediate cause of the siege to Mehmet's wrath over the failure of the Hospitallers to acknowledge his sovereignty. Caoursin credited the successful outcome of the siege to the Knight's military prowess, the wisdom and foresight of the master, Pierre d'Aubusson, and the personal bravery of all the people of Rhodes.

Like Caoursin, Kay believed the taking of Constantinople triggered a series of events that ended with the siege of Rhodes, but his translation found additional causes that are absent from Caoursin's work. Kay's version emphasized the religious nature of the conflict, and concluded that Mehmet besieged Rhodes to persecute and undermine the Christian faith. His interpretation discounted the military professionalism of the Knights of Rhodes and instead accentuated the importance of religious piety and fervor in fighting the Turk. Kay's grand summation attributed the ultimate success of the siege to Pope Sixtus IV, and in his conclusion the pontiff unites all of Christendom.

Kay made a valuable contribution to Caoursin's account by providing descriptive details about the ordnance the Knights and the Turks used during the siege. The classical Latin Caoursin used to describe the artillery lacked the vocabulary for gunpowder artillery. This terminological void has led some historians to conclude that pre-gunpowder artillery was the preponderate form of ordnance used at the siege of Rhodes.[12] D'Aubusson's letter, however, used contemporary military terminology. Kay probably obtained his detailed artillery description from d'Aubusson's official report, which was based on Caoursin. D'Aubusson's report used the words "bombards" and "mortars" to describe ordnance, not "engines" and "machines." D'Aubusson emphasized, far more than Kay or Caoursin, the Turkish use of large-caliber bombards that

threw balls that spanned nine palms (approximately 45 inches). D'Aubusson also describes the lighter pieces of artillery, including flaming arrows hurled from ballistas and catapults, colubrinos, and serpentines. The close parallel between Kay's description of artillery and that written by D'Aubusson suggests that Kay used D'Aubusson's as a source for his description of the ordnance used at Rhodes.

The text printed here is a transcription of the original printed edition that preserves Kay's spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. Kays English is still comprehensible to the modern reader, albeit with occasional pauses to "sound out" the words phonetically. In general, the letter "i" appears instead of the letter "j," and "y" is used in place of "i" (thus preiudyce=prejudice and subiectyon=subjection). The notes defining some of the more archaic words and usages are based upon the on-line Oxford English Dictionary; it would have been almost impossible to identify some of Kay's more obscure words without its electronic indexes. Other notes point out the sections where Kay differs substantially from Caoursin's Latin original.

# Siege of Rhodes

John Kay

To the moste excellente most redoubted and moste crysten kyng: Kyng Edward the fourth Johan kay hys humble poete lawreate and moste lowly servant: knelyng unto the ground sayth salute. It ys not out of your knowleche & herty pyte moste prudente Prince: howe that thies fourty yeres passed: the turkes hane vexed the crysten partyes & hane prevayled & had of the crysten men the overhande: in so moche that nowe late agaynest al right & reason were possessours in Italye in the domynyon & grounde of the most constant kyng Ferrand of Arragon king of Naples: in preiudyce & horryble terrour to the court apostolyque & to al crystendome. For by that the grete Turke late named Mahumete proposed & ordeyned grete myght & strenghte to undo & subverte the holy cytee of Rome, & putte Italye to his subiectyon & after lightly to overcome & oppresse the resydue of crystendome. But jhesu cryste our redemptour wold not his crysten people to be put into lenger peyne or to more trybulacion: he hath retrayte & withdrawen hys rodde: as a kynd father to his dere children contente with grete menasses & lytil punycyon.[1] Certes the synnes of the crysten people: as I thynke: & lytil regarde to our saveour Jhesu: meved & caused the ryghtwys god: to warne us to have him beter in mynde by the flagel[2] of this grete & mighty ennemye. But after repentance & prayers of

our holy father the pope: Cardynalles: Crysten prynces: & all crysten people: and with so grete pardones of the court of seyntes petre & paule: through the grace of the blessed Jhesu: this grete turke in his moste pryde & his moste hope hath made be sodeyn deth an ende of his lyve: and ys the cruel generacyon of the turkes for evermore. With goddes grace deiecte[3] & caste out of Italye. And all the turkes among them selfe in grete werres. whiche thyng ys token to all crysten prynces here after to recover the partyes crysten. Certayn yt ys moste gracyous prynce: that a fewe dayes afore hys deth layde siege to the noble cytee of Rhodes: which ys the key & yate[4] of all crystendome. But ther he was put to hys worse & to shame. And be cause that I have seen & red in Italye of the oppressyng & captyvyte by the sayd Turke of the worshipful cytee somtyme of Constantinople and also not many yeres passed of the infortunate losse of the strong cytee of Nygrepount. For the Cardynale greke of Mycene made & wrote in latyne the lamentable captyvyte of Constantinople to the pope: and Balthasar perusyn wrote in the langayge Italyon of Nygrepount to the lord of Vrbyn: for to meve the crysten people to prayers and provycion. I have thought more beter labour & more commendable purpos yf I in the reverence of Ihesu cryste & in the worship of your gode grace shulde put with dylygence out of latyn in english & to the understandyng of your people the dylectable newesse and tithynges of the gloryous victorye of the Rhodyans agaynest the turkes. Wherof they redyng shal have joye & consolacyon & shal alwey devoutely knowe by dayly miracles & goddes werkes the inestimable power & certente of our crysten fayth. And in so moche more to youre hyenesse I make a yefte of my labour: that your gode grace abondeth with al vertues: also much as in a moste crysten king longeth to be: And also I am of this opynyon that al the comyn wele & comyn gode cometh through god & the kynges to their peoples. Wherfor what so ever frute or pleasur your peple shal in thys my studies finde they shal yelde glorye to god & grace & thankynges to your hyenes. The which god almyghty kepe ever & prosper with all your noble desires.

Syth[5] that I have aplyed me to declare and publysshe to alle crysten people the siege of the noble and invyncyble cytee of Rhodes: Fyrst I purpose to telle and opene the causes that meved the cruell tyraunt Mahumete grete Turke and insacyable[6] enemye to oure crysten fayth that be with so grete might & so grete streynght vexed the Rhodyans:[7] how be it that afore this tyme the rhodians and the Turkes often have bad werrys:[8] Nevertheles thys cruel Turke after the subduyng & oppressyng of the myserable & dolorous cytee of Constantynople hath begonne & ordeyned agayns the cytee of Rhodes greter werrys thenne ever dyd hys predecessours. For the entente and purpos of the sayde grete Turke was to persecute and outerly undoo the crysten fayth. Therfore after the space of xxiiii yeres whenne that he had conquered many

empyres kyngdommes and lordshyppes was wrothe to see the lytyll cytee of Rhodes standyng so nygh his kyngdommes and lordshyppes: not subiect nor contrybutarye to hym: Therfore four dyvers tymes with shippes and men of werre assauted the castelles and places of the Isle of Rhodes where bothe by lande and by water thorough goddes grace he was venquysshed and overthrowe and of his oste many slayne with the Rhodyans many drownid and many putte to flyght and to shame: Therfore after he sawe the noble hertys of the knyghtes and people of Rhodes that nether by fyghtyng nether by power he might attayne the cytee: thought and ymagyned by subtylyte and cauteles[9] to have hys entente therof. And so often tymes after that he had grete part of Grece to hys obeysaunce temptyd to make peas and amyte wyth the Rhodyans: so that they wold knowlege hym as theyre souverayn: and yerely yolde hym a lytyll trybute whiche condytyon the Rhodyans alle weye[10] withseyed[11] and dyffyed.[12] And when he sawe that in no wyse he coude gette nor attayne trybute of rhodes in that manere: offerred theym yet peas: upon thys condytyon. That the embassetoures of the knyghtes of seynte Johan ofjerusalem: that ys to saye of Rhodes shulde come to hys courte and presente to hym certayn royall yeftes:[13] the whiche he thoughte to resceyve under the tytle of trybute: and so by wyles entended to make the sayde cytee of Rhodes trybutarye to hym. but he coude not spede hys fals purpos. For the noble and victoryous Prynce and renomed lord the lord mayster of Rhodes and hys prudent counseyl: refused of their ennemy peas nor wolde be of amyte with hym that was a persecutor of crystes fayth & crystes relygyon: And so daye and nyghte the most nobelest knyghtes of the sayd Relygyon: accordyng to their ordre helped aand defended oure fayth and the sayd cytee of Rhodes. For thees causes now sayd the furyous enemye conceyved agayns the cytee of Rhodes inestymable haterede & wrathe: and ymagyned yf he myght: outerly to dystroye the sayde Rhodes. And to this cruel purpose he was also meved by conseyl & persuasyons of the traytours of crystes fayth: the whiche had in knowlege alle the places and secretes of Rhodes. Among the whiche fals traytours & renegades was one especyal of the cytee of Rhodes: called Antony Melagolo: a man unkynd to god & to man. He was noble of byrth & evyll of condycyons & lyvyng the whiche by fore tymes thorough evyl guydyng[14] & onthryftenesse had brought hym selfe to poverte. Thys man thought & ymagyned by hys fals & subtyl witte a mene to tray & putte in destruaion his owen contrey. Aid therfore he dylygentely and pryvely espyed in the cytee of Rhodes al the places defensybles & indefensybles and pourtrayed & peynted theym in a papire: & bore the sayd pourtraytoure & papir to the cytee of Constantynople and anon after he shewed hit to the gretest cappetayn of the Turke and gave hym grete confort that he shuld put in hys mynde & dispose hym selfe to the destructyon & captyvyte of Rhodes. And so dede an other fals

renegate called Dymetryus Sopheano the whiche after the captyvyte & destructyon of the cytee of Nygrepont renayed[15] & forsouke the fayth of chryste & wente to the Turk. Thys Dymetryus by fore tymes had dwelled in Rhodes and had ben embasseteur from the Turke to the Rhodyans: under a fayntе[16] & colour to desire peas. Also after the space of iii yeres whiche were spended & occupyed in the conseylyng of thes werkes & that it had ben shewed: that they myghte come to their entence. the forsayd capteyne was wel pleased. To the whiche also many other renegates had gyven by dyvers menes counseyl and comfort. But among them al the forsayd Antony: sayde & affermed that a grete part of the walles of the cytee of Rhodes was olde and in decaye and that there were but fewe men of dyffence in the cytee. and also they lakked vytaylles.[17] and that they coude not have in tyme of nede helpe of crysten kynges. For they were to ferre from theym. And al this was graunted and for certayn affermed by Dymetryus & hys felawes renegades. And so with theire fals comfort it was thought necessarye to the partye of the Turke to ordeyne theire engynes and instrumentes: for the siege of Rhodes. In what tyme that thees thynges were thought and counseyled in Constantynople among the turke and his counseyle. The vyctoryous prynce and lord: The lorde mayster of Rhodes called Mayster Peter Daubusson: a man of high prudence and of the noble blode and hous of Fraunce[18] had knowlege of the conspyracye and fals ymagynacyon the whiche was wrought agaynest the cytee of Rhodes. And so by the grace of almighty god in the space of thre yeres next folowyng made grete reparacyons and renewed the olde walles of the forsayde cytee of Rhodes: Where as nede was. And also made pollitike and grete provysyons: that is to saye of wyne whete and other vytaylles necessaryes. And wrote epysteles & lettres unto alle contreyes landes and provynces of crysten relygion for the knyghtes of his ordre commandyng them to come kepe and defende the noble cytee of Rhodes. And so by the wil of god almyghty: Rhodes in al haste was fortefyed wyth vytaylles shyppes: and men of werre. But the traytour Antony thenne beyng in the cytee of Constantinople and not havyng knowlege of this grete provycyon of Rhodes comforted and exhorted the grete Basse that ys to saye the grete capetayne under the Turke. that he shulde in alle haste ordeyne hym to the siege of Rhodes. Wherupon the sayd Basse advertysed[19] the grete Turke of the enformacyons of the sayd Antony and other renegates. Wherfore amonges the knyghtes and men of werre of the turkys party was calleed a gret parlement and conseyle where many dyvers opynyons wer taken. For somme of them sayde that hyt was impossyble to gete Rhodes so lyghtely as Antony had sayde. For the cyte was so strong and the knyghtes were so noble that they wolde rather lese[20] theire lyves in fyghtyng for crystes lawe: and for the welfar of krystendom than ever to see in theyr lyf Rhodes in subiectyon of the Turke. Som of the turkes sayden that

Rhodes lyghtly shold be had & that sith[21] the tyme that Antony came to Constantinople whiche were but iii yeres: the lorde Mayster of Rhodes couth not pourveye for so many dyffautes[22] of the cytee: lyke as the renegate Antony Melagolo had told and gyven hyrn to understande. Therfore hyt was fynally and in alle haste concluded in the foresayd parlement and counseyle. That bo the by lande: and by see they shold make them redy for to goo to the siege of the sayd cytee of Rhodes. And forthermore were there called many connyng men in makyng of instruments of werre, that is to saye bombardes, gownes, culverynes, serpentines, & suche other. Among the whiche was one called George renegate: a man of subtyl witte that dwelled in Counstantinople and ther had wyfe & childeren. and for his subtil witte & grete connyng in makyng of suche instruinentes of werre: had of the Turke grete rewardes whiche George XX yeres afore passed had ben in Rhodes the whiche Cytee thenne was not so strong as nowe. And whenne the Turke commanded that the cytee of Rhodes shuld be pourtrayd and peynted on a table and shewed unto hym. Amonges alle other this George brought the best patron[23] drawen & pourtrayed. and so by him and by other the Turke toke for the last conclusyon to sende & laye siege to Rhodes. Consydering that with instruments of werre al maner of walles may be thrawen down. And also consyderyng hys grete power and myghte: by the whiche he had conquered and goten ii Empyres xii kyngdommes and many other landes and places. He also consideryd the grete goodes and profettes the whiche he myght have of Rhodes for asmoche as he knewe the grete comodytees & strenght of the same cytee of Rhodes bothe by lande and by see. And forthermore ymagyned yf he had Rhodes that he myght ordeyne werres agaynest many other landes bothe eest & west. Also this Turke knewe ryght wel: that the sayd Rhodes was an Isle of grete name & of goode ayer:[24] and that Rhodes in olde tyme was of grete amyte & chierte[25] with the Romaynes And also he thoughte yf he myght have the forsayd cytee of Rhodes: he shuld lyghtely put under his subiectyon al other countreyes aboute: and so in conclusyon he shuld conquere & subdue al the londes from the see called Egeum unto the see called Yoneum. that ys to say from the est part of the world to the west part. Notwithstandyng somme of his cappetaynes counseyled hym that he sholde not laye siege to Rhodes & that was token of his evyll aventure. Neverthelesse by his commandement his men of werre came toward Rhodes bothe by lande and by see. And they that went by see: sayled ontil tyme they arryved to a countre called Lycya. And fewe dayes afore that they were arryved there with their naveye came also[26] theder the other grete oste by lande: And soo they met eche other in the foresayd contrey of Lycya whiche is but xxii myles from Rhodes. Also they carryed with them by see grete instrumens of werre. that ys to say Bumbardes gownes serpentynes with many other instrumens of werre. for they were so grete & so

many that they coud not bryng them fro Counstantinople: but saylyng with shippes and galeyes: And of the sayd naveye & companye was Basse: that ys to say capetayn in english a Greke whiche was of the noble hous called Palliogolus: the whiche when he shuld take shippyng asked after Antony Melagolo. & hit was told him that four dayes afore he was myscheudusly slayne in Counstantinople Therfor he toke with hym Dymetryus renegate felawe[27] to the sayde Antony. & anon after theire departyng fro Constantinople by see: the turke send as sayd ys hys other oost by land that wente ferre[28] aboute by the countreyes of Asya for fere[29] lest crysten men shuld knowe theyre entente. The Turke also closed and stopped alle maner of passayges of his landys. save the secrete weyes that his oste wente. Neverthelesse the lord mayster of Rhodes by his grete witte & dylygence had knowlege of alle this array. For the Turke had messyngers that were not all trewe: for som of thayme told thayre maysters conseyle. But when the oste that wente by lande came to Lycye the Rhodyans had grete mervayle[30] what they were, and the turkes made a commyn sclandyr[31] to dysceyve the Rhodians and saydyn[32] that theyr lord the grete Turke was dede and they were sende thedyr lord to kepe the contrey of Lycye from harm of ennemyes. But the lord Mayster of Rhodes had knowlege of al thees wyles & falsede of the Turke. And therfore he wyth grete dylygence made strong wyth men of werre and vytaylles all the holdes bothe castelles and forslettes[33] within the Isle of Rhodes. That ys to saye: Longon; the Castylle of Seynt Petre; Feracle; Lynde; Monoleto. And alle the people of the Isle of Rhodes wythdrewe to the strong holdes with theyre goodes and catelles. And the barle that was rype lyghtly they gederyd hyt uppe and toke hit with thaym And be cause that whete and other maner of cornes were not alle rype thay plukkyd thaym uppe fro the ground as they were and brought thayme to the townes and holdes. And whenne thay were in doyng of these werkys with grete haste and furye the wache that was on the toppe of the hylle besyde seynte Stephen shewed a token & a knowleche: that in the west from Counstantinople was on the see saylyng a grete nombre of shippes. And thenne the most parte of the peple of rhodes wente unto the hye places & saw theim. And anone the same shippes wente toward a town called Physcom whiche ys in the countreye called Lycye upon the see syde xxii myles from Rhodes: and there they landed & receyved the men of werre that, came theder by lande by the countrey of asya as I have sayde afore. And thenne they tourned theyme in the see toward Rhodes. and so in a shorte tyme they were at the bankes of the Isle of Rhodes. And the nombre of shippes that came to the bankes of Rhodes was a hondred. And this was in the yere of our lord a thousand four honderd & four schore the x kalendre of the moneth of June. Aid anon with grete dylygence they voyded theire shyppes of the men of werre and of their ordonnances. And the men of

werre made their parkes and their tentes strongly upon the hylle of seint Stephen afore sayd. And afterward they putted theyre ordonnance on the see banke under the hylle of Seynte Stephen. Wherfore the Rhodyans sawe all theym that were on the hyll. But they myghte not see theire ordonnances and instrumens of werre whiche were on the see banke under the hylle: be cause of the hyenesse of the hylle. And soo anone the shyppes wente and came agayne from the bankes of Rhodes to Physcom bryngyng wyth theyme at every tyme their men of werre toward Rhodes. And in the meane whyle somme of the turkes on horsebake and on fote the moste hardyest ranne to the walles of Rhodes wyth grete menassing and crakyng.[34] And the Rhodyans wyth grete manhode wente agaynest theyme and putte theyme to flyghte and slewe many of theyme. And in the nexte daye folowyng the turkes made agayn an other assaute whiles the Rhodyans were at dyner. but also they were putte to flyghte and som of theyme to deth. But there was one of the knyghtes of Rhodes the whiche aventured himselfe to ferre and was slayne of the turkes. and thenne they toke his heede and putte yt on a spere and ranne with grete myrth and joye to theire companye and oste. And the body was broughte to Rhodes wyth the rayemente.[35] The turkes anone after sette thre bombardes of grete vyolence in the chyrcheyarde and gardens of Seynte Antony: whiche was but a lytill space from Rhodes. And with thees bombardes they studyed and thoughte to thrawe downe the hye toure & strong place of Rhodes called the toure of Seynte Nycolas: and covered their bombardes wyth grete logges and trees & bourdes of grete defence. But whenne the Rhodyans had spyed it they alsoo ordeyned thre grete bombardes agaynes the oste of the turkes: whiche casted throe the ryghte syde of theire oste grete and myghty stones: which dyd theyme grete harme. And in the mornyng folowing George the grete gonner of the whiche we have sayde afore: came sodeynly as amasid[36] man to the dyche of Rhodes toward the palays of the Lord mayster and saluted and greted the Rhodyans frendely and mekely cryed and prayed that he myght come in to the citee and so he was resceyved. And be cause that he had the rayement and leverey of the Turke somme smote at hym. But many dyffended hym and brought hym unto the Lord mayster of Rhodes. This George was a personable man and welbesene:[37] of grete eloquence and of grete malyce a duche man borne. And anone he was asked whiche was the cause of hys comyng theder. He answerde. For the fayth and relygyon of Jhesu cryste and for the welfare and worship of alle crystendom. And be cause that he forsoke the fals byleve of the Turke: therfore he was receyved with grete ioye and also his purpos was gretely preysed yf he wold abyde stedfastely in hyt as he sayde. Anone after yt was asked him. What oste the Turke had sende agaynest Rhodes and what nombre of fyghtyng men: and what ordenance of instrumens of werre. George with boldenes & with witte: & as it seined with throth[38] answerd to the

questyons and sayd that the turk had the nombre of an honderd thousand fyghtyng men and xvi grete bombardes euerychon[39] of xxii fote of lenght of the whiche the lest casted stones every stone of ix spannes in compas aboute. But within Rhodes were many opynyons and dyvers sentences of the comyng of the sayd George from the Turke to crysten folke. For somme sayd: that he came as a spye and that afore thys time he with grete malyce had done many thynges agaynest god and specyally had forsaken crystes lawe and that for certeyn he werked nowe for to betray Rhodes. The moste parte sayde: that he was a grete mayster in makyng of instrumentes of werre. and that he was a defensyble[40] man in whatsomever place he was in: and that he came to Rhodes as a penytent man that had forsaken his fayth and his maker and that suche a wyse man as he was: wolde not come to Rhodes all on to dysceyue suche a prudent man as the lorde mayster was: and suche a grete felyshyp ofknyghtes of Rhodes. And so was thought for the beter: that George sholde abyde in Rhodes. But anone fewe dayes after somme that loved the crysten fayth in the oste of the Turke shotte arowes with lettres into Rhodes: whiche letters were fonde and warned the Rhodyans: to be ware of the treson of George. Therfore the lord mayster commanded anone that george sholde be kepte with vi mighti men whiche sholde take hydde on hym.[41] But nevertheles he herde & had at alle owres georgys conseyle to suche provycyons that belongeth to engynes and instrumentes of werre.

After this the turkes with grete myghte of bombardes and other instrumentes of werre laboured day and nyghte to putte down & overthrawe a place whiche was a quater of a myle wythin the see by the weste banke of Rhodes: whiche maked with her walles and wynges[42] a plesaunt haven to shippes and galeyes and ys called the tour of Seynt Nycholas and it was made in the olde tyme and after the olde and bygge making[43] of walles. The sayde tour was sette so nygh the citee of Rhodes be cause that no persone by lande nor by water shold come to Rhodes withoute their lycence. And also the mouth of the haven and that place was so streyte that nether galeye nether shippe myght entre but only one at ones. and above thys porte was the forsayd seynt Nycolas toure the whiche was made of the Rhodyans within thye honderd yeres.[44] And the turkes thoughte: that if they had this tour in their subiectyon: that they sholde lyghtely overcome Rhodes considering the grete commodyte of the haven and of the selfe place of the tour. And therfore they casted agaynes the tour thre honderd grete stones of bombardes and brake the toure stoutely & put hit in a grete danger to be overthrawen and in moche lasse space thenne ever the Rhodyans thoughte that hit sholde have ben possible. But neverthelesse the nether[45] olde and auncyen walle stode stedfastely for hyt was made in olde tyme of a bygge matere and substance. And anone the lord mayster alleway prouydent and besye came to the tour

with a bargyeful of men and made reparacyons with stones and trees as in suche a tyme the case requyred and putte in the tour many fyghtyng men and the manlyest of hys oste the whiche sholde be the strenghte & the kepyng of that place in the toure that was so beten in the syde toward the west: that ther was lefte no maner of reparacyon: but with handes and nombre of strong men. After that thees provycyon had ben made in the forsayde tour: they ordeyned men of werre under the walles of the cytee and under the walle uppon the banke of the see: the whiche was from the castell of Seynte Peter: unto a certayne place called Mandrache. and there were men on horsebake & on fote that shulde lette the turkes to come to land in that coste: and there abowte the see is at every tyde flowe and ebbe: wherfore were there thrust done pypes and tonnes and tabelles full of nayles: so that the turkes what somever ebbyng befel shulde not passe over. And forthermore was made another grete provycyon: in that parte of the cyte wher the lorde mayster stode in clene[46] harnesse. for in that part were ordeyned bombardes & other grete instrumentes castyng grete stones for to breke the galeyes of the turkes. and also under the tour that the lorde mayster kepte were lytill shippes fylled with gonne pouder and brymme stone and other suche thynges: the whiche when the galeyes of the turkes came nere shulde be putte in fyre to the destructyon of the galeyes of the turkes. And whenne thees thynges were so ordeyned: all the Rhodyans with manhode abode from daye to daye and from oure to our: that the turkes sholde gyve theym assaute and in the mornyng next folowyng the turkes came with fifty galeyes[47] from the hylle of Seynt Stephen aforsayd toward the cytee and they thoughte shorrely to come a lande and there they made a grete crye and a grete noyse with trompes and taberettys & other suche instrumentes be cause that they shold make afered oure folke of theym for their grete noyse. But anone after whenne the turkes with theire gal eyes came nere the toure aforesayd: the bombardes and other instrumentes of werre whiche were there ordeyned. brake with grete might the arayes of the turkes and put theym offe fro the cost with their grete myscheffe. And in thys dede the Lord Mayster of Rhodes hym selfe came oute of the walles of the sayde toure wyth hys companye: for to fyghte hand for hand wyth the turkes. and there were overthrawen and putte to deth vii honderd turkes and many were wounded and many drowned as somme sayden[48] that came to Rhodes from the turkes. After thys the Lord mayster clene armed and rydyng by on a myghty hors came agayne to Rhodes with his feleshyp: as an Emperour Vyctoryous, and came to the chyrche: where was the ymayge of oure lady: called our Lady on the hylle of Felerene: whiche place ys full of myracles. and there he kneled downe and yolde thankynges and lovynges unto God and oure lady of hys vyctorye. and afterward came to hys pallays and howshold for to refresshe hys companye. And so whenne the turkes sawe that they coude not

overcome the forsayde toure: they purposed to breke the walles of the cytee wyth grete bombardes and gonnes in dyvers places of the same cytee and that be cause that the puyssance[49] & might of the Rhodyans shold be dyvyded and that they shold not be all in one place: as they had ben late in the defence of the forsayd toure of Seynte Nycolas and also they dede yt for more lyghtely to overcome the strenghte of the forsayd toure. Therfore in the nyghte nexte folowyng the turkes with grete noyse broughte grete bombardes and gonnes toward the walles of Rhodes in that syde of the cytee where as the Jues had kepyng wache & defence by the commandement of: the lord mayster[50] and be fore the sayd walles they putted. viii. grete instrumentes: whiche casted grete stones in the cyte & had made ronde abowte bollewerkes to the instrumentes be cause that the Rhodyans shulde not hurte theym. Another grete instrument they putted atte fote of a hylle toward the weste: above the whiche hylle stode the galowes of the justyce of Rhodes: and from that place they casted grete stones in rhodes in that part of the cytee where the wynde mylnes[51] were and brake theim all to pieces. Whenne the Lorde mayster sawe the purpos and the wyles of hys enemyes whiche had then made moche more strenghte and myghte then ever they had done by fore: he ordeyned in Rhodes processyons generalles with grete devocyon of hym and alle hys people of Rhodes. and after that they had made theyr prayers to god & to our lady in whoes quarell they faught: the Lorde mayster anon commanded to putte down the houses and habytacyons of the Jues that were within the cytee by the walles: called the Jure of Rhodes. Also were there made wythinne the cytee of Rhodes grete and mighty dyches: for the savyng of the body of the cytee yf the turkes gate the fyrste walles. and therfore they made day and nyghte grete werkes as walles of tymbre and many other thynges defensybles to the whiche labour every creature in rhodes of alle maner of aage bothe men and women of alle maner states putted and aplyed theym selfe and theyre goodes wyth grete wylle and grete devocyon for Jhesus sake. And in thees whyle the bombardes and grete gonnes of the turkes casted downe and destryed the walles of the cytee of Rhodes wyth so grete myghte and strenghte and with soo grete wonder: that alle they that were in Rhodes strangers and other olde and yong of all the countryes of crystendom sayd that they herde never strokes of bombardes so grete and so horryble as thylk were. The fals traytour George sayde also. that hyt was impossible after hys thynkyng to fynde in all the world suche instrumentes of werre that were so grete and horryble of noyse as they were for they of a town called Reede[52] whiche ys an honderd myles from Rhodes toward the eest herde the grete brute and the grete noyse as they sayd afterward. And also for to shewe and declare the mervaylous gretenesse of the sayde bombardes and gonnes: the grete pyles and postes strong and myghty that were stykked in the gronde behynde atte taylle of the forsayd grete

bombardes gave suche grete and myghty shakyng that the howses of Rhodes other whyles shaked in suche a wyse like yf hyt hadde ben a yerth quake. But they of Rhodes alleway besy and provydent stopped wyth trees the grete ruyne of theyre walles and made also many dyches wythinne the cytee. The turkes vexed also the Rhodyans wyth many other and dyvers instrumentes of werre. for they ordeyned rond above the foresayde Cytee of Rhodes certayn instrumentes of werre the whyche ben called Slynges or Engynes.[53] And the turkes with suche instrumentes of werre casted into the eyere a pipe full of grete stones the whiche foll upon the houses of Rhodes and putted theym in a wrecched ruyne wyth grete murdre of theym that were within for that tyme: and forthermore they putte in a grete thoughte and sorowe alle the hole cytee of Rhodes, for noo persone was sure in hous wythoute he were in a kave. But neverthelesse the prudente and wyse Lorde Mayster and hys noble conesyle fonde a remedye as hit foloweth. For anone he commanded: that alle maner of women and all folke of yong aage and olde aage not able for to fyghte shulde be putte by the walles of the towne in a voyde[54] place. for the guyse of the cytees ys to have next the walles suche a voyde place. and there were made myghty schaffoldes the whiche were not so hye as the walles of the cytee. for be cause that the turkes sholde not aspye hyt. for in suche voyde place they casted noo stones: but into the myddes of the cyte. The yong men able to fyghte kepte theym self & eshewed the castyng of the stones in the day lyght. and in the nyght they hyded theym in strong places & kaves, so that by the myracles of god & prayers of crysten people fewe men or bestes of the cyte were hurted. The turkes not understanding howe god pourneyed[55] & kepte the Rhodyans harmeles ordeyned two grete slynges in a hye place toward the weste: from the whiche they myght seen all the cyte of Rhodes. and fro thens they casted grete stones in the myddes of the cytee. hi thees meane whyles whenne thees thynges were so ordeyned: the grete basse of the turke sawe & consyderyd that the dylygence of the Lord mayster noyed moche to hys power and to hys counseyles. Therfore he dysposed by meane whyles to putte to deth the forsayd Lord mayster of Rhodes. And ordeyned two turkes, of the whyche one of theyme shulde goo & yeld hym selfe to the Rhodyans for to lyve in crystes fayth & telle the Rhodyans, that another of the turkes whiche was hys folawe sholde also come to Rhodes and forsake the fals byleve of the Turke. But the Basse, that ys to saye the cappetayne of the turkes had ordeyned, that the same felaw shold bring poyson into Rhodes: wyth which the Lorde Mayster sholde be putte to deth: and be cause that thees two turkes shold aventure theym selfe to poysone the Lord Mayster: the basse hadde promysed theim many grete rewardes. But he that came to Rhodes afore hys folawe as we have sayde was in hys talkyng and in hys purpos: and in alle hys delyng in Rhodes fonde inconstante and varyante. Wherfore anone the Rhodyans had

demyng[56] and playne opynyon: that he was come for to worke som trayson. And so after dylygente and strayte examynacyon: he confessed the trayson and hys boldenes and therfore was he putte to dethe as a traytre. The daye nexte folowyng hys felawe[57] no thyng knowyng of thys: came toward Rhodes. but the crysten men stroke sore upon hym. Wherfore he fledde and torned agayne to the turkes & so the basse was begyled[58] of his trayson. In thees whyles the turkes werred agayns one syde of the cyte called the warde of the Italyans. & in a derk nyghte they came so nygh that they putted gonnes and grete bombardes upon the bankes of the dyches: and made grete strenghte wyth trees rond abowte that they sholde not be broken with no maner shottes of the Rhodyans. But anone after they were spyed and sene. Wherfore there was a conseyle made in Rhodes: where fyfty lykkely yong men and veray lovers of oure lord Jhesu cryste promysed them selfe there to deye in that quarell: or to destroye in that same nyghte the sayd grete bombardes and gonnes with alle theire araye. And so a knyght of the ordre of Seynt Johan was capeteyne to the sayd fyfty lykkely yong men. and they came pryvely by the bothome of the dyche wyth certayne ladders whiche they broughte with theym to the bankes wher as the bombardes and gonnes were: and made suche a fray that the turkes fledde away fro the bombardes: and .x. of theym were slayne. and also they destreyed alle that ordonnaunce and casted in the dyche. And thys done the forsayd fyfty yong men wyth theyre capeteyne came agayne in to the cyte of Rhodes as men vyctoryous. Wherfore the Lord Mayster of Rhodes gave unto theym many worshypfull yeftes[59] be cause of theyre vertuous manhode: and for to gyve courayge & exhortacyon to alle other. And they were resceyved in Rhodes wyth grete glorye and joye & also they had grete thankynges of alle the people of Rhodes. Therfore fewe dayes after that thys was done: the turkes for despyte and grete annoye of the foresayd thynges whiche were done unto theyme made anone redy a grete ordonnaunce and came agayne unto the tour of seynt nycolas for to have it. & anon with their bombardes boldely they casted downe the bollewerkes & forslettes.[60] And as faste as they casted theym downe the Rhodyans repayred theim agayn. The turkes also made a long brigge of the lenght of a quater of a myle. the whiche recched from the banke there as the turkes laye: unto the banke of seynt Nicolas toure. and was so large: that .vi. men on horseback myghte ryde a fronte and was made with voyded[61] pypes and wyth bordes strongly nayled upon them: & purposed to bryng the same brigge by craft into the water. and they fested and knytted strangely to the sayde brigge grete and myghti ropes whiche had in thother ende strong ancures: whiche ancures they fasted with a bote to the nether bank of the tour, so that the brigge with the drawyng of the corde and flotyng shulde have recched to the sayd banke. Anone after that Rhodians had knowleche of thees werkes. a shipman wel experte in

swymmyng: wente by nyghte and [un]tted the cordes fro the ancre and knytted theim unto a stone of the banke: so that lyghtely whenne the turkes drewe the corde: they knewe wel that they were begyled of the Rhodyans. The lord mayster of Rhodes understandyng thys nobe acte: rewarded the forsayd shypman worshipfully and right largely. And so whenne the turkes saw and knew the grete frawde whyche was done to theym of the Rhodyans: thoughte and ordeyned that they wold brynge the forsayd brygge theder[62] wyth grete strenghte. and nombre of botes being full of rowers whyche botes were conduted and ledded with xxx. galeyes of grete defence and with .vii. or .viii. grete and myghty careckes ful of gownes and boinbardes for to caste downe the forsayd tour. And after that to putte in ruyne the haven and walles of the cytee. And also they ordeyned certayn bargyes to bryng to lande the moste manly men of werre of the turke whiche sholde fyghte hand for hand with the Rhodyans. In the meane while that they whiche were on the brigge, & they of the shippes shulde fyght agaynest the tour, and shold araye the brigge and putte their men and instrumentes of werre atte grounde the lord mayster asked counseyl of all the most proved knyghtes and crysten men that ther were moste manly & most wyse. And of theim selfe of Rhodes whiche were ful of wysedom and bolde manhode. And there was geven counseyl That the tour sholde be strenght with dyches rounde abowte. And be cause that yt was gravell and stone the lord mayster with grete costes hyred a thousand laboureurs with pykes and shoules whiche nyhgt and daye dyd that they were commanded. And where the toure was feble and in ruyne: were ordeyned agaynest the fyrste assaut men of werre: & also were ordeyned men of werre in the netherest dyche: to helpe the Rhodyans yf nede were, for they dred: that the turkes shold have assauted the cytee and the tour al at one affray. Therfor the lord mayster putted also strenght of men into the walles of Rhodes whiche were beten downe with bombardes. That is to saye in the warde of the thytalyans[63] and in the warde of the Jues. And for cause that alle the helthe and defence of the cytee was in the welfare ot the sayd tour: every man wyth one voys cryed. that the toure sholde be dylgygentely and manly kepte. where afterward the knyghtes bothe of latyn tonge and grekys tonge dyd worship fully as ever dyd Achylles or Hector. But two yong men soldyers of the sayd toure threwe downe their harnesse in the see to thentente[64] to be turkes. And afterward when thys was knowen: they for their synnes and defawtes were byheded. And so after this: aboute the .xvi. daye of the moneth of July the yere aforsayd in the tyme of mydnyghte the turkes came pryvely by water and by lande for to come to the toure: and with theyre labour and payne broughte the brygge to the fote of the tour and made thenne a stoute and horryble crye, as they have in theyr guyse afore that they begynne to fyghte. But oure crysten folke anone herde and perseyved their boldenesse. wherfore wyth crosse

bowes and bombardes they kepte theym offc: and brake their brigge: where many turkes were drownyd & four galeyes and careckes were broken with stones & instrumentes of theym that were in Rhodes, and many of the turkes that were sette a land by the brygge from the shippes and galeyes anone after were slayne and many wonded & som of the shyppes were brente[65] and somme of their gables[66] were ky tte: so that the shyppes were loste in the see. Neverthelesse the turkes from thother banke manly and stoutely faughted and defended their people aforsayd wyth castyng to the cyte & the toure: grete stones of bombardes and of gonnes & wyld fyre and arowes of bowes and balestres. And soo alle the nyght from twelfe the clocke unto .x. in the daye they faught all by derke: but as the fyre of the bombardes and the flammes of the wyldfyre gave lyghte. And so after that the turkes were put oute: With their grete dammage and harme & that the men of Rhodes had the vyctorye: a man myght have seen thre dayes folowyng ded men of the turkys partye: casted and lyyng in the banke of the see toward Rhodes. Whiche were fonde arayed wyth golde and sylver and precious clothyng: and parte of their araye was seen flotyng in the see. whiche geyre and araye was taken uppe by the crysten men with grete profyte and wynnyng. And in also moche more was thys vyctorye in gladnesse to the Rhodyans: be cause that there were slayne many noble turkes: and in especial a cosyn of the grete turke. the deth of the whiche was a grete sorowe to the grete turke and to all hys people. and hys body was fonde on the banke spolyed of the Rhodyans. And anone after thys grete fyghtyng: somme turkes yelde them to the crysten people of Rhodes: and sayde for trouth that ther were slayne of the turkes thre thousand and fyfe honderd: and that the basse by the space of thre dayes: for sorow & thoughte spake wyth noo man of hys companye nor with none other. And anon avysed the grete turk of thys grete myschyfe that was befalle to theym. And in so moche more was wroth, that wyth so grete deth of hys people and myschevous harmes, he had noo thyng profyted agaynest Rhodes: nether agaynes the forsayd tour: but with hys dammage and shame was putte offe, as not able wyth alle that foleshyp and myght to overcome the cyte of Rhodes, as he hadde pourposed. And so after that the turkes sawe: that they coude not wynne the toure by strenghte and myghte: anone they tourned theire fantasye and studyed wyth alle theire vertue and myghte to assaute the cytee. and in especyal they made grete assaut agaynest the walles that were kepte by the Jues: and also agaynes the walles that the nacyon of Italye kepte and defended. and shortely the turkes made grete dammages and hurtes all abowte the walles of the cytee wyth theire grete gonnes and bombardes: in so moche that they thought to come by wyles and subtyll meanes nygh to the walles of the cyte. And so they made certayn dyches in dyvers places of the fyldes: and covered theym with grene bowes, and afterward they putted erthe and turves uppon

the same: and myned faste & pryvely. for they pourposed to come to fyghte hande for hande wyth the Rhodyans. Also they ordeygned certayne logges whiche they coveryd wyth grene bowes be cause that they sholde not be knowen: and fro thens they shotte to the walles of Rhodes grete bombardes, gonnes and serpentynes in suche a wyse: that noo man durste loke out of the walles of the cytee to theire fylde and to their werkes. And in this whyle the turkes fylled a certayne place of the dyche of the citee wyth trees and stones and suche other thynges: so that the dyche was made equall and playnnyssed[67] unto the heyght of the broken walle: soo that lyghtely they myghte come for to feyghte hande for hande with the Rhodyans. Then the Lorde Mayster of Rhodes consyderyng and seeyng openly the grete hardynesse of the turkes: and also the grete daunger that the cytee of Rhodes stode in, he as a noble Prynce lovyng and defendyng hys sayde cytee and lordshyppe and hys people: wyth grete dylygence called alle hys famous knyghtes and governours of hys werres: and thenne he declared & shewe[d] to theyme wyth prudence and eloquence the grete daungers, in the whiche by the furye and open boldenesse of the turkes, Rhodes the moste crysten cytee stode in. Fewe dayes by fore the siege of Rhodes, was come from the royame of Fraunce to Rhodes the myghty and exellente knyghte named Antony Daubusson: whyche was brother to the Lord Mayster of Rhodes. Thys Antony Daubusson was Lord in Fraunce of a place whyche ys called Montelyon a man of grete wysedom and counseyle, strong and hardy in werres and bataylles.[68] He departed from the royaume of Fraunce wyth a company of clenly and lykkely men: whiche were able to fyghte under what somme ever baner that belonged to kyng or Emperour. And hys entente and purpos was: to vysyte devoutedly the blessyd and holy sepulchre of oure Saveur Jhesu cryste in Jerusalem. But whenne he understode and perceyved: that the grete Turke sholde come and lay siege to Rhodes: he pourposed to helpe and defende the cytee of Rhodes wyth juberte[69] ofhys lyfe and all hys companye. for he thoughte: that in noo maner place: nor in noo maner wyse he myghte spende hys bloode better: and more for the welfare ofhys soule: thenne there: where he shulde fyghte for the precyous name of oure lord Jhesu cryste: and for the ryghtfull quarell of all crysten fayth: and to kepe from captyvyte of the turkes the noble cytee of Rhodes. and be cause that hys holynesse and hys herty love whiche he hadde to the fayth of Jhesu cryste: and also that hys grete manhode was well knowen to all the knyghtes of Rhodes: the Lord Mayster his brother and all the counseyle of Rhodes. elected and chosed hym capetayn and governour of all the men of werre. And soo manly and wysely be ordeygned and dysposed hym to all suche thynges that shulde noe to the pourpos of the turkes and that shulde helpe and strengh Rhodes for the worshyp, helthe and perpetuell glorye of alle crystendom: And anone after thys he hadde a grete oste in whyche were many gentyll knyghtes,

Baylyffes, pryours, Maysteres and breheeren of the order of Seynte Johan. Of the whyche the most manlyest men were borne in England and in Fraunce, and in other countreyes of the weste. There were also merchauntes and men of dyvers occupacyons of the selfe Rhodes, and of many places of Grece: the whyche in wysedom and prudence of many worldly thynges hadde knowlege and experyence. Alle thees to geder, wyth one word, wyth one herte, and wyth one feythe, pourposed and swere to defende and kepe the cytee of Rhodes: or elles to dye gladdely and kyndely for hym that dyed for us alle. And soo anone after a man of Grece,[70] wyse and experte in sieges counseyled the lord mayster and the Rhodyans to make and ordeygne an engyne called Trebuke lyke a slynge, whyche was grete, hye & myghty and casted grete and many stones into the hoste of the turkes. and so by thys meanes the turkes were in grete fere & juberte. for their loggyses and tentes were broken and smyten to grounde: wyth moche & grete dammage and hurte to theire gonnes, bombardes, sepentynes and all theire ordonnances of werre: so that in fewe dayes they resceyved thees hurtes and dammayges wythoute nombre. We have sayd be fore: howe the turkes fulfylled a parte of the dyche by the walles wyth stones. And be cause that the Rhodyans coude not voyde hit[71] openly: they made a myne under the ground: by the whyche pryvely they bare the stones in the cytee. But the turkes anon perceyved: that the heyght and the hepe of the stones was made lesse, & that they coude not crepe uppe by that weye: but yf they hasted theyme: & soo they dyd. But before the rhodyans with grete besynesse fonde a remedye to the defawtes of the walles: the whiche the turkes by that syde of the cytee had caste downe to the grounde. For they withinne the walles not ferre from the dyche made a fronte of a walle wyth stakes and erthe in the myddes and wyth buskes thrusted strongly to geder and tempered it wyth water lyke as they make a mudwalle: and upon thys walle they putted gonnes, culverynes, wildfyre and barelles full of pyche & sulfur and grete hepes of stones & suche thynges: that shuld lette the turkes to clymbe uppe: so that hit was a pleasur to see their besynes agaynes the begynnyng of the turkes assaute. And for to have in thys werke counseyle: was theder brought the forsayde George traytour. but he shewed no cunnyng in the defence of the cytee as he hadde promysed, and as the Rhodyans trusted. For the fals and wikked man was pleasyd to see so grete ruyne in the pryncypall walles of Rhodes: and hoped that lyghtely the turke sholde overcome yt. Nevertheles for to cover hys mynde and malyce counseyled the Rhodyans to sette a bombarde: whiche sholde caste from thens to the hoste of the turkes for to breke theire bombardes. but he wyste well that therof they shulde have grete hurte: wheder it had ben a token & covenaunt betwene the turke and hym: or of hys owen auyse dyd hyt: thynkyng that the turkee shuld in so moche more caste toward that parte for to breke the Rhodyans shotte. But soo as he counseyled was

done. and anone grete harmes and dammages came of hyt. for the turkes dressed all their shotte thederward and gave greter hurte to the broken walle. And in thys whyle were shotte arowes into Rhodes wyth lettres: whyche blamed George that he dydnot hys dever for the turke in Rhodes: in also moche as he gave not theyme certayne tokenes of the ruyne and condycyon of the cytee. But they knewe not howe George was kepte for suspecte within Rhodes: as a man gylte of trayson. And whenne hyt was tolde and shewed to George. He answered boldely and wyth shrewed langayge: wherfore the Rhodyans hadde hym in suspecyon and was putte in pryson And anone by wyse men was examyned and fonde varyable in hys answeres: Wherfore wyth tokyns suffycyent was putte to tormente: where he confessed: howe that the Turke hadde sende hym theder to betraye Rhodes yf he myghte, as he hadde betrayed many other places in Grece. whyche confessyon he affermed after also wythoute tourmente. And sayd: howe the Turke had byd hym: yf Rhodes myght not thenne be goten: to abyde nevertheles in Rhodes all the siege tyme: & lenger to espye all the condycyons and maners of their defences & that afterward he sholde telle yt to the Turk for to purveye strenger siege: & more to the pourpos of victorye. For the turkes entencyon: was fynally, to have the cyte of Rhodes. Wherfore George hadde of hym grete yeftes and rewardes. But anone after George was dampned to deth: and in the syghte of all the people of Rhodes for hys trayson and myschevous counseyles was hanged, and anone after every man of Rhodes retourned agayne to kepe theire place wyth grete gladdenes that George the fals traytour of crystys fayth and he that hadde studyed to putte to deth soo many noble and worshypfull knyghtes: and to defowle and revessche so many good and honest women and holy vyrgyns, hadde atte laste fonde a nynde accordyng to hys traysons and myschevous dedys. Anon after thys the basse that ys to say the grete Capetayne of the Turke caused other lettres to be casted in the cytee of Rhodes: in whiche lettres he conforted and warned the bourgeyses of the sayd cytee and other merchauntes of crystendomme whyche were wythinne the cytee: that they shulde fynde the meanes for to yelde theyme and delyvere to hym the Cytee and they sholde have theire landes and their goodes save and their bodyes free and harmeless. for he wolde but onely dystroye the knyghtes and men of werre beyng wythin Rhodes: and yf they dyd otherwyse, he menassed to putte theim all equally to deth. and by thees meanes and cauteles he ymagyned and thoughte to putte dyvycyon amonges the people of Rhodes but he coude not spede his fals purpos: for he fonde theyme juste and trewe to God and to the ordre of Rhodes. And soo whenne he sawe and consyderid that thys fayled hym: he yet by wylenesse sende a man in the nyghte tyme to the dyches of Rhodes: in that syde of the cytee where stode a chyrche of oure Lady called Elemonetra. Thys man was a Greke and late had forsaken crystys fayth and

wente to the Turke. And so thys greke called and sayd to theym that wached ther: that the grete capeteyn of the turk wolde sende an embasseteur to the Lord Mayster: yf the Rhodyans wolde lete hym goo and come sure. They answered and sayd to thys man: that they were well contente, that the grete capeteyne of the Turke sholde sende hys embasseteur unto the dyche and bollewerke of that syde of the cytee: and that there sholde be a noble man, the whiche shulde gyve an answere for the Lorde Mayster: & so the day next folowing the Embassetoure of the forsayde Capetayne came theder: And sayde: howe that he hadde grete mervayle: that suche a lytyll cytee wolde withstande and resyste agaynest the grete myghte and puyssaunce of the dredefull Turke: whyche had conquered .ii. Emperys and so many kyngdommes. Therfore he exhorted theym, to have pyte of theyme selfe: and not to be the cause. that the cytee of Rhodes sholde be taken by the assaute of the turkes and by strong hande. for thenne the turkes sholde putte to myscheffe and to vyolence, bothe men and women beyng in the cytee of Rhodes: and forthermore he sayd that yf they of Rhodes wolde desyre & and take of the turkes peas they sholde have hyt, wyth the possessyon of the selfe Rhodes. and wyth alle theire goodes: or elles they shulde be putted utterly to destructyon with all maner cruelte: and so he menashed to be, in shorte tyme to come: and therfore he bade theim answere: wheder they wolde peas or werre. Thenne anon answered the noble and prudente knyghte that there was for the Lorde Mayster: and sayde. howe that the Rhodyans hadde grete mervayll: that the turkes with soo grete naveye. and wyth so strong armee: agaynes the honour of all manly werryers shulde exhorte theyre ennemyes to peas. And sayd that the Rhodyans understode and knewe ryght well the feynte & fals colour of theym: for they wyste well: that they dyd hit be cause that they sholde preve their hertes. Therfore he sayde that nether by yeftes nether by menasshes they wold do shame to crystendom: and that wythinne the cyte of Rhodes was a comyn acorde among the grekes & latynes and al the people of Rhodes, whiche wold rather dye for crystes fayth: thenne to be of amyte and of the lawe of Mahumete. And yf it so were, that the turkes wolde breke uppe their siege and turne agayne to their countreye: and after sende embassetoures to Rhodes for peas: the Rhodyans sholde thereof by conseyl gyve theym an answere. but syth that they were so myghty in armes: they bade theym use and doo that they came fore: and that thorough the grace of Jhesu they sholde knowe, that they had not to doo nor to fyghte wyth men of Asea their countrey couherdes and unherty as women. but they sholde know wel and perceyve, that they shuide feghte and be in hande wyth strong manly and crysten people of Rhodes. After the whyche answere, the turkes wyth loe chiere and halfe shamely contenaunce, departed from theyme and tourned agayne to their oste and to theyre capeteyne. But the more that the Rhodyans wythstode the turkes wyth

myghte and wysedom: the more waxed the turkes furyous agaynes Rhodes. And anon after thys wyth grete bombardes gonnes engynes and all other suche instrumentes of werre: they vexed and greved the Rhodyans and purposed to preve: yf the dedys of the Rhodyans sholde accorde wyth theyre grete wordes. Therfore lyke wyse as they hadde done a grete and horryble assaute agaynest the toure of Seynte Nycolas .xxxvii. dayes passed ordeyned and dressed alle theyre bombardes & gonnes of were alle theire ordonnance and theire myghte agaynest the pryncypal strenghte and moste neweste walles of the cyte of Rhodes: ho we be hyt that they were large, newe, and fortefyed wyth myghty toures and bollewerkes: nevertheles wyth castyng of thre thousand and fyfe hondred grete bombardes stones: they were horrybly brused and thrawen downe. And many worshipfull places and howses of the Rhodyans by that syde wyth the hurte & the ruyne of that newe walle were myschevously broken & destryed all to pieces. The whiche myserable case and horryble ruyne fered many of the Rhodyans hertes and putted theyme to more thoughte and sorowe thenne ever they were sythen the comyng of the turkes theder. But the Lorde Mayster as a stedfaste Prynce trustyng in Jhesu cryste and in hys swete mother marye and in Seynte Johan Baptyste conforted alle the people: so that nether the knyghtes, nether the pryours nether the baylyffes of the ordre, nether merchaunts, nether people in Rhodes were afered: but gladly as the case stode were redy and contente to fyght hand for hande wyth the turkes at broken walles and playne place. And so the turkes by two or thre evenynges followyng came to the dyches wyth theire taberettys and made songes of myrthe: hopyng that wythin shorte dayes they sholde gete rhodes. And the Rhodyans from thother syde of the broken walle answered thayme as merely agayn wyth trompettes and claryons. but the Lorde mayster knowyng by hys prudence, that anone wyth grete myght & furye the turkes wold come theder to assaute the cytee: he fortefyed the walles with knightes of hys ordre and moste manlyest werryers: and he hymselfe by the broken walle was full of besynes, to teche, warne and comforte all the people abowte hym: and was redy & atte alle owres abode to gyve socour to the knyghtes & werryers on the walles. and so was all hys people from the hyest degree unto the loest dysposed. In thys whyle the turkes made theyme redy in their oste for to come and gyve assaute And made a commyn crye: that the grete Turke gave theym all the goodes that were in Rhodes: and that they sholde take al the yong chyldren in Rhodes and cause theim to renaye their fayth: and they that were above .x. yeres unto .xx. sholde have their throtes kette: and all that were above that aage yf they were taken alyve shulde be persed thorow the fondemente and thorow the hede with a long stake. Wherfore they bare wyth theyme to the assaute .viii. thousand stakes: and that the Turke all onely was contente to be vyctoryous and lorde possessour of Rhodes. Anone after thys

crye all the turkes came toward Rhodes. but afore that they gave assaute after their fals beleve called to their helpe Mahumete and wasshed theim all naked in rennyng water: in tokene of purgacyon of their synnes: and after they arayed theim everychon after hys qualyte of werre: and broughte sakkes wyth theim to putte in the goodes of Rhodes: and tyed al their gyrdels ropes to bynde theire prysonners. for they hoped in theire God Mahumete: that they wythoute fayle shulde have vyctorye of Rhodes. The daye afore that the grete assaut and bataylle was: they casted and shotte agaynes the walles grete stones of .viii. the gretest bombardes that they had and casted downe the reparacyons and defences, whiche the Rhodyans hadde made in the broken walles: so that they stroke and slewe the waches that were on the walles: in the night folowyng. for they sessed never thorowyng throe alle that daye and the nyghte and alle the: mornyng of the daye folowyng: in the whyche the grete assaute was made: soo that ther myght no body surely stande upon the walles ner might stoppe the grete ruyne of the walles. for in a shorte space were casted thre hondred grete stones. After that the turkes hadde fynysshed their shotte of bombardes: the fyfte kalendre of the moneth of Auguste abowte .viii. the clokke in the mornyng they came to geder with grete multitude & nombre: and anone they passed over the dyche. whiche was then fulfylled with the ruyne of the broken walles of the cytee: and so anon they clymed lyghtely upon the walles and more lyghtely, then the Rhodyans coude in their syde wyth ladders and steyres Anone after that thees turkes wer upon the walles they slew all the crysten men that there were in defence, & setted uppe there their standerdes and baneres: afore that the Rhodyans might clymbe up with ladders to the walles. but anone the Rhodyans were there redy at their handes: and was gyven of one parte & other a grete & horryble crye. for all the parte of Rhodes cryed on Jhesu cryste: & the turkes cryden Mahumete And so the Rhodyans feghtyng manly & hertely resysted and withstode the grete preesse of the turkes. There was the worshipful Lorde, the Lorde of Montelyon capeteyn of the men of werre of Rhodes: and brother to the lorde mayster. And ther were wyth hym many manly knyghtes of the ordre of Rhodes: and many other men of the cytee: of the whyche in that assaute and bataylle, somme were slayne & many wonded. Ther were in that syde of the assaute four grete ladders in dyvers places for to goo up & downe to the walles: of the whihe one was towaard the Jues strete. and by that ladder and place the turkes came down into the cytee. But anon the lord Mayster commanded: that yt shulde be kytte & pulde downe. And he hym selfe in an other place by: wente upon the walles with hys companye: & there they faught agaynes the ennemyes of crystes faythe, as manly as ever dyd the romaynes for their empyre. And slewe many turkes: and fynally beted theym offe. But the Lorde Mayster had fyve woundes Of the whiche one was juberte of hys lyfe: but throe the grace of God and

helpe of leeches & surgeons he was helped. And he for hys grete manhode & noble herte to God & to hys ordre, through all Rhodes was called the very father and defensour of the cytee & of the fayth of Jhesu cryste. And what grete glorye and lawde he & hys companye with all the feghtyng men of Rhodes that same daye deserved: the noble and manly acte shewed hyt. for upon the broken walles of Rhodes. and in the places that we have sayde were .ii. thousand and fyve honderd turkes in clene harnesse: and behynde theim folowyng by and by, as after was sayde and knowen: was the nombre of .xl. thousand turkes. They that had goten the walles fawght for to thruste down and caste offe the walles the crysten feghtyng men: whiche manly resysted theire furye. & so the feghtyng endured by the space of two owres that hit was in dowte, who shulde have the victorye. for other whyles a man shulde have demed that the Rhodyans shuld have hadde the victorye. and anone the fortune chaunged so that no man sholde have thought the contrary but that the turkes sholde have had the vyctorye of the Rhodyans and theire entente of the cytee. for fortune was so mervayllously instable. But after the space of two owres through the grace and pytee of almyghty god and through the vertu & manhode of the worshypful & tryumphaunt the lorde mayster of Rhodes & of hys people the turkes were putted utterly to the worse. They were smyten downe and beten out offe the walles with soo grete myghte and manly feghting of the Rhodyans whyche so stedfastely came upon theym: that the turkes with grete fere and hastynes tourned their bakkes & fledde in soo grete nombre that in fleying one hurted and wounded the other. But one of the fayrest, and manlyest dedys, and worthy to be had in mynde: that the crysten people dyd in that assaute agaynest the turkes was: whenne a grete nombre of the turkes were upon the walles in the warde wher the Jues had the kepyng: and there the sayde turkes stoutely feghted for to thrawe down of the walles the crysten feghtyng people for to have entree to the cyte. But the crysten people with grete manhode & furour: threwe downe of the walles to the cytee thre honderd of theyme: and more, whiche were slayne: som with the horryble falles besyde the walles. for the hienes of the walles was of .xx. fote so that the Rhodyans clymmed uppe with ladders: and often myghte not for the shotte of the engynes of the turkes come upon the walles: but by a certayn token of the ryngyng of a Iytyl belle at the wache place of the walles, somme were brused and afterward slayne wyth the Rhodyans wepons: soo that all the strete called the Jure by the walles was full of their bloode and caren: and theder afterward came all the people of Rhodes to see & to wondre the myscheve of the turkes. Also after that the turkes soo myschevously and shamefully were putte offe of their assaut and fledde to theire hoste: the Lorde Montelyon brother to the worshipfull Lorde Mayster pursued theyme into their tentes and loggyses:[72] where they slewe many of theyme & spolyed theyme of their juelles and

harnesse ofwerre, & of theire baners & standardes: the whyche they brought with theyme to Rhodes, cryyng merely & making grete joye: & entered agayne into Rhodes through the broken walles, for a perpetuall memorye. In that assaute for certayne were slayne thre thousand & fyve honderd turkes. for theire carens[73] & bodyes were fonde and sene and nombred by the Rhodyans: of the whyche bodyes & carens som were fonde within the cytee, som upon the walles and many in the dyches, and by the see syde. And be cause that all Rhodes stanke of their carens bothe within and withoute: they putted theym all on a hepe out of the towne: where they ordeyned grete fyre: with the whyche anone they were brente and consumed to asshes. But they that afterward yolde theyme to the fayth of Jhesu cryste and forsoke their fals beleve because of certayn myracles that folowen: sayde for trouth, that syth the turkes came to laye siege to Rhodes there were of theym slayne .ix. thousand: and xv thousand sore wounded & grevously hurte. And thys they knewe in so moche, as the grete Basse of the turkes made after thys grete assaute comptes and rekenynges of al his men of werre. and soo the Basse with all hys oste was full of sorowe & confused. But alweye God almyghty for to delyvere fynally Rhodes hys crysten cytee: and for to put the turkes in greter confusyon: shewed sodenly in thys assaute. hys love and hys swete grace to his crysten people. For by the comandement of the lorde Mayster: a baner of Jhesu criste Another of our Lady and another of seynt Johan baptiste patrone of the ordre of Rhodes: were sette uppe on the walles whenne the bataylle was on bothe sydes moste sharpest. And anon after the turkes saw properly in the myddest of the clene and bryght eyer, a crosse all of shynyng gold: & also sawe a bryght vyrgyne; whiche had in her hande agaynes the oste of the turkes a spere and a shylde: and in that syght also apired a man clothed in pouer and vyle araye: whiche was accompanyed wyth grete nombre of fayr and welbesene[74] men in armes: as yf they wold have comen downe to the helpe of Rhodes.[75] By the crosse of golde we may justely understande: oure saveour Jhesu cryste. And by the vyrgyne we may understande, oure lady the blessed marie. And by the man pouerly clothed we may understande the holy seynte Johan baptyste Patron and avowre[76] of the ordre of Rhodes: whiche was acompanyed with seyntes & angeles of God for to helpe the Rhodyans. The whyche goddely and hevenly syghte putted playnly the turkes in soo grete wonder and fere: that in no maner after that vysyon: they were hardy to loke toward the cytee of Rhodes. But anone after they toke counseyl among theyme to leve their entente and tourne agayne to their countreye, so that through the grace & myracles of almyghte god and through the prudence and dylgence of the lorde mayster and fayth and manhode of the knyghtes of Rhodes: & obeyssaunce of all the people: Rhodes was and ys preserved and kepte fro the turkes captyvyte. Thees myracles in so moche more are in confirmacyon and

devocyon to our crysten fayth be cause that the firste knowleche of theyme came by the vysyon and syghte of the turkes ennemyes to oure crysten fayth. For afterward many of theyme forsoke theire fals beleve: and were crystened withinne the cytee of Rhodes: wher as they openly and constantely to alle the men of Rhodes, wyth one accorde and with a goode courayge made fayth and knowleche of the goddely and hevenly vysyon whiche they had seen.[77] And for certayn every wyse man may knowe: that without Goddes hande so fewe crysten men might not have resysted & withstanded so grete nombre of turkes: & in especyall when that they were upon the walles. for then they thought to have merely & with lytill pryne[78] the victorye of the cytee of rhodes. But who letted theym then to come down fro the walles to the cytee: afore that the Rhodyans clymed with ladders to feght with theim & dryve them fro the walles: Certainly hit was none other but god. who was he, that blynded their witte, so that anon after the firste assaute, they ordeyned not an other agaynes our crysten men: whiche by the first assaute had ben pyteously hurte & wonded & were all wery of fyghting. Hit was non other but God. Who was cause of the deth of so many of theym in the space of two owres in the grete & last assaute: but god & his angels that were seen in the bright eyer. Who was he shortly that putte from the vyctorie of Rhodes so lytil a cyte in comparyson of others: as Constantinople & nygrepount & many moe strong & myghty: the Turke strong and ful of pryde. Well may every man knowe that it was more goddes acte then mannys. Wherfor we alle crysten men mekely & with herty devocyon, owe to yelde graces & lovynges[79] to almyghty God: Whiche had preserved rhodes the keye of all crystendom from the foule & unrightful subiectyon of the turkes: Whiche hath ben for theire evyll purpos smyten and kytted in pieces as bestes and fynally were putted from theire entente. But for to come to the conclusyon of the departyng of the turkes. Anone after that they were putte to flyght: they wente bakward a large myle: and there they made newe tentes, to abyde there: whyle they charged their shippes and galeyes with all their ordonnances of werre.[80] And in this whyle they charged in lytyll galeyes, daye by daye and oure by oure their men that were sore hurt and wounded with all their arraye: and brought theym agayne to the contrey of Lycya: Where they had resceyved them whenne they came toward the siege of Rhodes: and ther they abode tyll they were hole, and myghte tourne agayn to Turkea their countreye. That same Lycya was to theim a grete commodyte and to all their entente, for from thens to Rhodes was but a narowe see, called the see Lycyon. And not ferre from the banke of the sayd Lycya: was a grete & old towne called Physcum: where fyrst they abode the navey that came from Constantinople: and nowe also were there wyth their woundes dylegentely refresshed. And soo anone after thys: yt was concluded among the turkes: that all the oste shold departe from Rhodes. Therfor they made a grete wast and

destryed all maner gardens and vynes & al other thinges the whiche they supposed that might doo ease to the Rhodyans. Also they brende many houses & spolyed fyldes of their catelles & charged their shippes with grete nombre of the bestes of the Isle of Rhodes, whiche myght not afore the siege be broughte into the cytee nor into the holdes of the Isle. & in the mene whyle that the turkes made theym redy to retourne to their countreye, were spyed & sene from Rhodes two grete shippes in the see saylyng from the weste toward Rhodes: & anone the Rhodyans hadde demyng that they were shippes of crystendome and of their frendes. And as they supposed, yt was. for they were send theder by the moste crysten kyng & moste devoute Prynce Ferrand of aragonne kyng of naples to helpe and socour the Rhodyans agaynes the turkes. for the shippes were charged with the moste manlyest men of werre of his kyngdome and of all stufle necessarye for theym. Thees two myghty and strong shippes entred frendly toward the porte of Rhodes aboute one the clokke after mydday in the beholdyng and syghte of the Rhodyans: whyche therfore made grete joye and myrthe: and yolded grete graces & lovynges to almyghty God. But whenne they shoold entre into the haven the turkes shorte grete stones of bombardes to theyme: soo that one of theyme was sore hurte in the maste and the tother eschwed and escaped the shotte withoute hurte. and soo they casted theire ancurs & abode the tyde that they might enter into the haven: but toward the nyghte the see waxed so rough, that they durste no lenger abyde there at the ancure. Therfore the shippe that had not ben hurte toke the brode see. and thoder shippe be cause that her maste was in a grete daunger: doutyng to sayle: abode the tyde wyth all paryll and juberte. But throe the grace of god almyghty at that tyde entered surely into the haven of Rhodes. the nexte daye folowyng the other shyppe whyche hadde taken the brode see retorned agayn to entre into the port: but a myle & a half fro the porte the wynde fayled her & myght seyle no ferther: Wherfore the turkes sende theder twenty galeyes of their naveye arayed and armed for to fyght & overcome the shypp & bring her to the turkes: but the crysten men of napies and of Secylle that were in the shypp bare theym: and quyted so manly: that nether for the shotte of the galeyes nor for the might of soo many men that there were agaynest so fewe: they never made token of fire, but resysted so manly & vertuously that in the space of thre owres that the bataylle dured they slewe four tymes greter nombre of turkes then they were theim self soo that they hadde the better hand and were vyctoryous. & in that fyghtyng was slayne the schief capeteyne of the sayde galeyes. and wyth rhys harme & shame retourned the galeyes to their partye: and the shippe of the crysten men the day folowyng with full sayle & standerdes of victorye & tryumphe entered into the port of Rhodes. Thyes two shippes broght to Rhodes mery tythynges. for they brought the popes lettres whiche were red & declared openly be fore

all theym of Rhodes that wold gyve audyence therto. In the whiche lettres our holy father the pope comforted & desyred of the lord mayster & of all the crysten people that was within Rhodes that for the love of Jhesu cryste they wolde with all their hert & manhode withstande the furye of the turkes: & that in al haste they shold have socours from Italye bothe by see & by lande in so grete nombre and strenght, that they shuld be lightely delyvered of the travayles andpeynes: whiche bothe daye & nyghte the turkes wyth all besynes ymagyned and wrought agaynes theim. for the hoste of the crysten people shuld come so myghte: that wyth the grace & helpe of God they shuld be able to gyve bataylle to al the puyssance of the turkes & have the beter of hit. Wherfore the Rhodyans alle wyth one voyce thanked God and magnefyed wyth grete praysynges our holy father the [pope] Syxte the fourth: the whyche tythynges wente anone to the oste of the Turkes and fered theym fore wherfore they the soner departed from Rhodes: wher they had ben at the siege thre monethes save a daye. & tourned agayn to the countrey of Lycya & arryved to the grete towne Physcum: where they taryed and refresshed theym nerehand .xi. dayes: and afterward tourned to their countrey, with their grete shame, their hurte & grete myschefe. Deo gratias.

1 A. W. Pollard, "The Siege of Rhodes," *Library* 7 (1906): 423–424, called the book an unsolved puzzle of English incunabula, because the type was similar to the one used by W. de Machlinia and J. Lettou, but changes and modifications in its appearance suggested that a different printer used it to print Kay. George Painter, *William Caxton: A Biography* (New York, 1977), 115, identified this printer as William Caxton, based on some similarities in the type and the style of translation. Pollard and Redgrave, *A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1475–1640* (London, 1976), no. 4594, tentatively names J. Lettou and W. de Machlinia as the printers, with a publication date around 1482. The ISTC (no. icOOl 11000) dates the publication between 1482 and 1483: Gesamtkatalog, 06012.

2 Richard Firth Green, *Poets andPrincepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980).

3 British Library, Cotton MS. Titus A. xxvi, f. 160v (fragment); Rossell Hope Robbins, "Good Gossips Reunited," *The British Museum Quarterly* 27 (1963): 13–14.

4 A. Murray, *The Crusades* (chapters 57, 58, 59, 60, and 61 of Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*), London, K. Murray and Son, 1870.

5 H. W. Fincham, ed., *Caoursin's Account of the Siege of Rhodes in 1480, Translated into English by John Kay, the Poet Laureate to King Edward IV,* intro. by E. J. King (London: Museum of the Order of St. John, 1945 [1926]). Also Eric Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes,* relies upon Kay as his primary source.

6 Facsimile editions of Kay's translation of *The siege of Rhodes-*. Gulielmus Caorsin, *The Siege of Rhodes (1482)* in *The English Experience. Its Record in Early Printed Books published in Facsimile,* Number 236 (New York, 1970); Guillaume Caoursin, *The Siege of Rhodes (1482) Translated by John Kaye, and Aesopus, The Book of Subtyl Histories and Fables of Esope (1484), Facsimile Reproductions,* intro by Douglas Gray (Delmar,

NY, 1975). The newest iteration is the digitized microfilm of the copy held by the British Library, available from Early English Books Online (stable url: http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88–2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo: citation: 99844088).

7 Tim William Machan, "Chaucer as Translator," in *The Medieval Translator: The Theory and Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages,* ed. Roger Ellis (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989): pp. 55–67.

8 Malcolm Hebron, *The Medieval Siege: Theme and Image in Middle English Romance* (Oxford, 1997): pp. 77–84. Hebron incorrectly reports that Kay omitted Caoursin's chapter divisions in order to create a unified narrative. Caoursin's chapters were the work of later printers; Ratdolt's edition lacked any chapter divisions.

9 Thea Summerfield, with Rosamund Allen, "Subjects of Translation: Chronicles and Historical Narratives," in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English.* Volume I: *To 1550,* edited by Roger Ellis (Oxford, 2005), p. 352.

10 Monfasani, "Bessarion Latinus," pp. 179–181.

11 Michael Herzfeld, "New Light on the 1480 Siege of Rhodes," *The British Museum Quarterly* 36 (1972): 69–73.

12 For example, Butler, "The Siege of Rhodes," p. 7, mistranslates tormenta as torsion (which is more descriptive of ancient Roman artillery) and refers to catapults as major artillery pieces.

1 "Punition," meaning "punishment."

2 Or "flail."

3 "Dejected," meaning, "to overthrow."

4 "gate"

5 "Seeing that," or "since."

6 "Insatiable."

7 Here Kay's prologue ends and his Latin translation begins.

8 "Wars."

9 A "cautel" is a trick or a crafty device; "cautelous" (literally "full of cautels") means by deceit or by craft.

10 "Weye" can mean "deceived," but here might mean "were."

11 "Opposed."

12 "Defied."

13 "Gift."

14 "Guiding," or "governance."

15 Literally "renegaded"; "renounced his faith."

16 "Feigned"; also "feint," or stratagem. "Colour" here would mean the badge, emblem, or flag of the party.

17 Articles of food, or provisions.

18 Kay's translation of Caoursin's "galliam celticam natus."

19 Informed, notified.

20 "Lose"

21 "Since"

22 "Defaults."

23 "Pattern."

24 "Air"; "good air" here meaning style or grace.

25 "Amity" and "cherte," here meaning friendship and affection.

26 The word is struck out in the text.

27 "Fellow," in the sense of "associate" or "accomplice."

28 "Far"

29 "Fear"

30 "Marvel"

31 "Slander"

32 "Saying"

33 The printed text reads "forslettes," probably a misprint for "fortlet," a small fort.

34 "Cracking" has two obsolete meanings, either or both applicable here: "shooting," and "boasting."

35 A variant of "arrayment," meaning outfit or accoutrement.

36 "Amazed," meaning bewildered, confused, or witless. George is feigning insanity.

37 "Well beseen," good-looking or of good appearance.

38 "Truth"

39 A form of "every one."

40 An obsolete use of defensible, referring to a man capable of defending a fortress.

41 Or "keep him in custody."

42 OED cites this passage for the meaning of "wing" as "a lateral appendage."

43 "Powerfully-made walls"

44 Kay omits Caoursin's reference to the Colossos of Rhodes.

45 "Lower" walls. Kay informs us the Tower of Saint Nicholas was built upon the foundations of a much older structure.

46 "Shiny, lustrous" – an older definition of clean.

47 Caoursin does not mention the number of Turkish galleys.

48 "Said."

49 "Power, prowess."

50 The Jewish garrison is Kays creation. Caoursin does not mention that the master gave any commands specifically to the Jews of Rhodes.

51 "Windmills."

52 Kay's translation of "Castelli rubei."

53 The word sling suggests a trebuchet; however, Caoursin identifies these engines as gunpowder artillery.

54 A vacant or empty place; a void.

55 Possibly a typo for "journeyed," with the obsolete meaning to defer a summons to another day or adjourn.

56 "Deemed," "judged."

57 "Fellow."

58 "Cheated," "foiled."

59 Gifts.

60 Possibly "fordettes."

61 Unfilled, or empty pipes; voided.

62 "Thither," or "there."

63 "The Italians."

64 "The intent."

65 "Were burned."

66 "Cables."

67 "Planed," "leveled."

68 According to Caoursin, Anthony d'Aubusson was on his way to visit the Holy Sepulcher with a company of knights when he stopped off at Rhodes and stayed to help fight the Turks. Kay creates an international army, containing "manly men" from England and France.

69 "Jeopardy."

70 Curte identifies this engineer as a Venetian, not a Greek. Caoursin supplies no information about his origins.

71 Or empty it.

72 A detail missing from Caoursin.

73 "Carrion," or corpses.

74 "Good looking," "of good appearance."

75 Here Kay affirms the reports of an apparition to the Turks and interprets it, which is not found in Caoursin. Kay attributes the Knight's victory to divine intervention rather than military action.

76 Properly "avowry," meaning "advocate" or "patron saint."

77 The mass baptism of Turks is not found in Caoursin. The following lines are Kay's interpretation of the events.

78 "Effort."

79 "Praises."

80 Here Kay resumes translating Caoursin's text.

# Chapter 7
# Ademar Dupuis, *Le siège de Rhodes*

The author, whose name has been recorded as Merri Dupuis, Mary Dupuis, Ademar du Puy, or Ademar Dupuis, was a member of the Order of the Hospital who arrived in Rhodes in time to witness the siege. He may have been the same man who served as the Prior of Auvergne between 1519 and 1521.[1] His description of the siege survives in two fifteenth-century imprints:

- *Le siège de Rhodes* (Lyons: Printer of l'Abusé en court, after 19 August 1480). ISTC No.: id00400350; Gesamtkatalog 9097.
- *La siege de rodes* (Audenarde: Arend de Keysere, 1482). ISTC No.: id00400400; Gesamtkatalog 9098

Dupuis's book is very rare today.[2] Most researchers know of it because the Abbé Vertôt reprinted it with the title *Relation du siége de Rhodes en 1480 par Merri Dupui, témoin oculaire,* in 1726.[3] Vertôt described his source text as a Gothic imprint, and assured the reader that he retained the original's spelling, but changed the punctuation to make it more readable. A comparison of Vertôt's text with the two incunables, however, reveals that Vertôt modernized Dupuis's spelling, punctuation, and changed every occurrence of the word "et" to ampersands. Also, on more than one occasion, Vertôt or his transcriber made errors reading the incunable's typeface.

There are no major textual variations between the two editions; they contain different (but not consistent) methods of spelling, forming contractions, and inserting consonants. A comparison of the two printed editions is of interest to students of Old French orthography because the spelling shows the differences between northern and southern French in the fifteenth century. For this edition, I have corrected the printing errors and noted unique examples or variant texts in footnotes. Below, I have listed the most common and consistent spelling differences between the two volumes. The words in **bold** are the spellings I have chosen for the text:

| Lyons (ca. 1481) | Audenarde (1482) |
|---|---|
| “a”=“e” | |
| **chacun**,chescun | chescun, cescun |
| **dedans** | dedens |
| “au”=“aul” | |
| au | aul |

| | |
|---|---|
| **aucun**,aulcun | aulcun |
| **aucunement**,aulcunement | aulcunement |
| **aucunes**,aulcunes | aulcunes |
| **autres** | aultres |
| “c”=“ch” | |
| commenca | commencha |
| commencerent | commencherent |
| encommence | encommenchie |
| francoises | franchoises |
| “ch”=“c” | |
| approuchent | approucent |
| cheval | ceval |
| chevaliers | cevaliers |
| “ct”=“tt” | |
| actendre | **attendre** |
| mectre,**mettre** | mectre,**mettre** |
| “e”=“a” | |
| embessade, ambessade | ambassade |
| **sembloit** | sambloit |
| “ei”=“i” | |
| meillieu | **millieu** |
| **merveilleusement** | mervilleusement |
| “i”=“y” | |
| bois | **bois**,boys |
| maison | mayson |
| murailles | muraylles |
| **pais** | pays |
| **trois**,troys | trois,troys |
| **Juifrie** | iuyfrie |

| Lyons (ca. 1481) | Audenarde (1482) |
|---|---|
| “it”=“ict” | |
| **audit** | audict |
| **dudit** | dudict |
| **fait** | faict |
| **ledit** | ledict |
| lesdictes, lesditz | lesdicts, lesdits |
| **leurdit** | leurdict |
| **trait** | traict |
| vitoire,**victoire** | **victoire** |
| “j”=“i” | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **jamais** | lamais |
| **jardins** | iardins |
| **Je** | le |
| **Jehan** | iehan |
| **joyst** | ioyst |
| **jour** | iour |
| **jusques** | iusques |
| **Juifrie** | iuyfrie |
| “l”=“11” | |
| **ala** | alia |
| **ale** | alle |
| **aler** | aller |
| **alerent** | allerent |
| **palais** | pallais |
| **seulement** | seullement |
| “nt”=“nd” | |
| **grans** | grands |
| **grant** | grand |
| quand,**quant** | quand |
| **tresgrant** | tresgrand |
| “nt”=“nct” | |
| **saint** | sainct |
| “o”=“ou” | |
| **voloit** | vouloit |

| Lyons (ca. 1481) | Audenarde (1482) |
|---|---|
| “oi”=“oy” | |
| **avoient**,avoyent | avoyent |
| **cuidoient** | cuidoyent |
| **disoient**,disoyent | disoyent |
| **estoient**,estoyent | estoyent |
| **faisoient** | faisoyent |
| **navoient** | navoyent |
| **passoient** | passoyent |
| **savoient** | scavoyent |
| **seroient** | seroyent |
| **tenoient** | tenoyent |
| **tiroient** | tiroyent |
| **virent** | veirent |
| **venoient** | venoyent |
| “ou”=“o” | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **approucherent** | approcherent |
| beaucop,**beaucoup,** | beaucop |
| beaucoupt | coste |
| **couste** | cops |
| **coups** | copperent |
| **couperent** | |
| “sa”=“sea” | |
| sa | Sea |
| **saroit** | scaroit |
| **savant** | scavant |
| **savoient** | scavoyent |
| **savoir** | scavoir |
| **savoit** | scavoit |
| **savons** | scavons |
| terminal “s”= terminal “z” | |
| **fosses** | fossez |
| **fustes** | feustez, fustez |
| ils,**ilz** | **ilz** |

Other spelling differences:

| Lyons (ca. 1481) | Audenarde (1482) |
|---|---|
| **affuter** | affuster, afeuster |
| **affuterent** | affusterent |
| **affutoyent** | afeustoyent |
| aprouches,**approuches** | **approuches** |
| **bombardes** | bombaerdes,**bombardes** |
| bone | bonne |
| chrestien | **christien**,xpristien |
| de | des |
| **derniere** | derreniere |
| **doncques** | donques |
| esglise | **eglise** |
| la quelle | laquele |
| **maulx** | mauls |
| **mondit seigneur** | monditseigneur |
| **nostre**,notre | **nostre** |
| **palais** | pallais, palays |
| **petiz** | petis |
| **peut**,**peust** | peult |
| **pie** | piet |
| **pierres** | pieres |

| | |
|---|---|
| **piez** | piets |
| **plusieurs** | pluiseurs |
| quieulx | quelz |
| **turcs**, turcz | **turcs** |
| vaillamment | **vaillanment** |
| **vieilles** | vielles |
| **virent** | vierent |

For this transcription, I consulted the DMF: *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français,* version 2012 (ATILF - CNRS & Université de Lorraine, http://www.atilf. fr/dmf), and Hindley, Langley, and Levy, *Old French-English Dictionary.* I chose spelling based upon consistency within the text. When offered a choice, I selected terminal "s" over terminal "z," initial "j" over initial "i," and the "ulx" suffix over the "uls" suffix. I did not attempt to translate the text into modern French, but when offered an alternative I choose the version that might be more familiar to the modern reader. An analysis of the lemmata convinced me that doing so would not affect Dupuis' choice of words, because his two printers had already taken considerable liberties with the spelling.

Dupuis's *Le siège de Rhodes* was not the work of an author accustomed to the written word. In comparison with John Kay, who cited his written historical sources, and Jacobo Curte, an eyewitness who interpreted the siege through his theological training, Dupuis related what he saw himself and what he heard from others who witnessed the siege. Yet despite the essential differences in composition and delivery, the structure of Dupuis' narrative is very similar to Caoursin's Latin text. For example Dupuis' description of the arrival of Master George in Rhodes is very similar to that found in Caoursin:

1. Master George arrives at the ditch below the magisterial palace in Rhodes, and asks to be admitted into the city.

> Caoursin: ...eiusque diei diluculo Georgius machinarum egregius artifex de quo habitus est sermo: repente ad fosse ripam que magistri palatium munit visus est: amice omnes salutans clamitansque ut introducatur ab rerum ignaris vix confoditur. defenditur ab aliis: extemploque ad magistrum producitur.

> Dupuis: Quant ilz furent afustez et quilz commencerent a tirer contre ladicte tour ung jour bien matin sen vint au bourt du fosse du boulevart du palais de mondit seigneur le maistre ung alemant nomme maistre George qui estoit christien renye, fort excellant homme en fait dartillerie. Et de prime face quil ful arrive salua les gens de la ville moult gracieusement en leur priant quilz le missent dedans la ville et quil sen venoit rendre a monseigneur le maistre.

2. Description of Master George, a well-formed German of good stature.

Caoursin: Vir enim erat corpore procero: forma eleganti: satis eloquentie: magna astutia: cui germania patria est.

Dupuis: Ce maistre George estoit ung homme grant bien forme de tous ses membres et de belle stature beau lengagier de grant entretenement et homme fort malicieux a le veoir et oyr parler.

## 3. D'Aubusson interrogates Master George, who says he defected for the love of Christianity.

Caoursin: Rogatus de causa adventus respondit zelo fidei compulsus et publico christiane religionis comodo suasus ad nostras defecisse. Placide excipitur: laudaturque propositum si in eo persistat.

Dupuis: Mondit seigneur le maistre le fit interroguer et examiner par quoy il sen estoit venu lequel respondit que pour la vraye amour et zele quil avoit a la foy Christienne et aussi pour le bien et pour lutilite de la ville et de tous Christiens et quil se repantoit du mal quil avoit fait davoir erre encontre la foy Christienne.

## 4. Master George's intelligence about the Turkish forces.

Caoursin: De hostis exercitusque habitu dispositione qualitate consultus constanter: prudenter: intrepideque respondit. Inter cetera edocet numerum militum omnis generis centum milia vel circiter adesse: classem earn quam diximus machinas sexdecim ingentes devexisse. quarum longitudinis dimensio palmorum duorum et viginti fertur: que vehementissimo velocissimoque iactu globos saxeos rotunditatis palmorum novem plerosque undecim torquent.

Dupuis: Premierement disoit que du nombre des gens estant audit siege estoient environ cent septante mille hommes de toutes manieres et condicions de genes, de bombardes y avoit entre les aultres seize grosses pieces qui avoyent xxii. piez de longueur et ung pie quatre dois despesseur de metail lesquelles gectoyent la pierre de neuf a unze paulmes de rondeur: et six gros mortiers qui gectoyent la pierre aussi grosse ou plus que lesdictes bombardes. Et grant quantite daultres plus petiz batons a feu.

## 5. Reactions to Master George among the Hospitallers and the Rhodians.

Caoursin: De huius viri defectione varie quidem sententie suboriuntur. Quidam exploratorem affirmant: et fugam commento asservisse ut rhodios fallat. NonnuIIorum assertio fuit eum callidum et maleficum virum esse: multaque olim effinxisse. Quibusdam aliis sentientibus: et in bonam partem defectionem interpretantibus: que prudens esset et penitens errati id fecerit: sapideque intelligeret hec rhodiis machinari non posse: ubi tarn prudentem principem: et expertissimos milites intelligit degere.

Dupuis: De la venue dudit maistre George diverses furent les opinions. Aucuns disoient quil etoit venu pour espie. Les aultres disoyent qui! estoit venu pour bien et quil se repentoit. Les aultres disoient quilz lavoyent veu aultreffoys avant quil fut renye quil estoit homme cault et malicieulx et ingenieuxet quil sen faisoit bon garder.

## 6. The Turks shoot arrows into the city which carry the message "Beware of

Master George."

> Caoursin: Augent suspitiones epistole ex castris turcorum in civitatem sagittis misse: que Georgium insimulant et ab eo cavendum esse dictitant.
>
> Dupuis: A la fin fut grant souspecion sur luy car Ion commenca a tirer dedans ladicte ville et cite de Rhodes des fleches ou il avoit ateche des escripteaux dedans lesquieulx escripteaulx avoient en escript gardez vous de maistre George.

7. D'Aubusson decides to have six robust men guard George.

> Caoursin: Magister ingenio solers et perspicax Georgium arcta custodia servari iubet. sex robustissimis comitibus adhibitis: in his que machinarum iactum et belli ingeniaspectant: ipsius arte caute utitur.
>
> Dupuis: Mondit seigneur le maistre prudent et saige du tout en tout entierement commanda que ledit maistre George fut bien garde. Et la bailla en garde a six homines et leur commanda que sur paine de la vie que nuyt et jour ilz le gardassent.

These and other close similarities suggest that Dupuis knew of Caoursin's text and used it as a model, but he did not intend to translate Caoursin's narrative. Instead, he relates his own story. Aside from his initial denial of any scholarly pretentions, the text contains additional clues suggesting Dupuis dictated his account to a scribe. Sentences have no beginning and no end. The words are highly repetitive, and the text continually reminds the listener of the subject of the sentence. Even the spelling differences between the two editions suggest they were dictated to the compositers, and not set from a manuscript. These details make the two editions of Dupuis' *Le siège de Rhodes* an important work for the history of French printing, vernacular military terminology, and the development of French historical writing.

# Le siège de Rhodes

Ademar Dupuis

En[1] lan de nostre seigneur Jesuscrist miile[2] quatre cens huitante le grant turc infidele ennemi[3] de la foy CKristienne plain dorgueil et denvie et pour cuider destruire la foy catholique et la christiente et pour soubiuguer les christiens et conquester pais et royaulmes feist quatre grosses armees. Lune desquelles envoya contre le roy de hongrie; la quelle armee par la grace de dieu fut du tout destruicte: et tous les Turcs prins mors et occis. La seconde envoya au royaulme de poulle contre le roy ferrand roy de naples ou ilz firent moult de grans maulx et prindrent par force une cite nommee octrante en la quelle[4] ilz sefortiffierent. La tierce envoya contre le soubdam. Et par force vouloit faire ung chasteau en la terre du soubdam pour aucunement le tenir en soubiection, et amoult grant puissance le commenca a faire. Mais quant le soubdam en fut adverti il y envoya ung capitaine avec son armee. Et par force feist rompre et abatre et demolir tout le chasteau encommence. Et fut larmee du turc rompue et moult grant quantite des turcs occis et prins. Et la quarte armee envoya devant la ville et cite de Rhodes. Icelle cite cuider avoir par force et la destruire. pour ce que cest la ville du monde quil hait le plus. et que il destruiroit plus volentiers. Mais par la grace de dieu il en a este bien garde et encore sera se dieu plaist.

De laquelle derniere armee. Cest assavoir decelle qui a este devant Rhodes. Je Mary du Puis gros et rude de sens et de entendement Je vueil[5] parler et descripre[6] au plus brief que Je pourray et au plus pres[7] de la verite se Ion que Je peu veoir a lueil. Et peu de temps apres ce que ledit siege fut oste ou leve et aussi pareillement en ce que Je nay[8] ouy parler raconter[9] et aussi pareillement[10] tesmoigner[11] a

# The Siege of Rhodes

Ademar Dupuis

In the year of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand four hundred eighty, the great Turk, infidel enemy of the Christian faith, full of pride, envy, and

presumption, made four large armed expeditions to destroy the Catholic faith and Christianity, to subjugate the Christians, and to conquer countries and kingdoms. One of them he sent against the king of Hungary; this expedition by the grace of God was completely destroyed, and all the Turks were taken, dead, or wounded. The second he dispatched to the Kingdom of Apulia against King Ferrand, king of Naples. There they committed a great many evils, and captured by force the city of Otranto, which they fortified. He dispatched the third expedition against the Sultan. And he wished to build a castle by force on some of the land of the Sultan, to hold it in subjugation, and he began to amass great power. But the Sultan was aware of him and sent a captain with his army, who forcibly attacked, fired upon, and demolished the castle under construction. The army of the Turk was destroyed, and a great many Turks killed and captured. He sent the fourth army before the Town and City of Rhodes, which he assumed he could take by force and destroy. Because it is the finest city in the world, he would more willingly destroy it. But by the grace of God, it was well guarded, and will be again, if it pleases God.

Of that last expedition, that is to say the one at Rhodes. I, Ademar Dupuis, awkward and ignorant concerning meaning and knowledge, will say and write in brief as near to the truth as I am able, according to what I have seen with my eyes and likewise from what many others told me a short time after the siege plusieurs qui y ont[12] este presens et qui ont tout veu tant chevaliers[13] que aultres gens de la ville.

Non obstant que en moy na pas science ne intelligence pour comprendre ne de scripre une si haulte et une si grant victoire que dieu a donne[14] et envoye aux nobles chevaliers et vaillans gens qui estoyent dedans ladicte ville de Rhodes ladicte annee durant le siege. Mais seulement en gros Je descrips selon que Je le peu savoir pour en advertir ceulx les quieulx en vouloront savoir des nouvelles et aussi les quieulx y prendront plaisir de loir[15] lire.

Et[16] premierement est assavoir que la ville et cite de Rhodes est assise en une belle et bonne et grant isle moult bien fertille et habundante des biens[17] du couste du soleil levant: la quelle isle si est toute enclose de mer. Et est ladicte ville ou cite de Rhodes une tresbelle et tresbonne cite[18] et grant et ya bien bon port de mer bien marchant et lung des plus grans[19] passaiges de tout le levant devant laquelle et alopposite[20] dicelle est assise et situee la turquie qui est terre ferme et ung grant pais dont le infidele turc joyst et possede. Et peut avoir depuis ladicte ville jusques a ladicte turquie .xviii. mille de mer a passer qui valent environ six[21] lieues francoises. Et laquelle ville de Rhodes est assise en beau pais et de belle venue de toutes pars bien muree et tourre[22] et a la[23] muraille .xxii. piez despesseur et plus, et ya de[24] beaux fosses et larges tours[25] afons de cuve et la ville la mieulx close que Je veiz[26] oncques qui soit au monde comme Je croy. Et est bien garnie dartillerie tant grosse que petite[27] et

de tous aultres batons. Et ya tousiours beaucoup de nobles[28] et vaillans chevaliers et de toutes les nacions du monde qui sont chascun jour prestz et appareilles de combatre pour la foy catholique et defFendre la christiente, et qui souvent courent en turquie et qui jamais nont paix aux turcs et infideles. was lifted. These people, Knights as well as townspeople, were also present and witnessed it.

Even though I have neither the book learning nor intellect to comprehend or write of such an exalted and great victory that God bestowed upon the noble Knights and valiant people who lived in Rhodes during the year of the siege, yet I will fashion only an approximate description, according to the little that I know, to spread the news of it, and also to take pleasure in singing its lore.

And first it should be known that the town and city of Rhodes is situated on a beautiful, good, and large island, the most fertile and fruitful in the Levant. The entire island is completely surrounded by the sea. The town of Rhodes is a very beautiful, good, and great city. It has a very good seaport, well used, and one of the best passages of all the Levant. Turkey, a large country that the infidel Turk enjoys and possesses, is positioned on the mainland opposite it. Over the sea, the city lies eighteen thousand paces (which is approximately six French leagues) from Turkey. The town of Rhodes is located in a beautiful countryside and on a pretty site. All of its districts are well-walled and towered; and the wall is more than twenty-two paces high. I believe the town, with its beautiful ditches and large towers situated on the moat, the best disposed that I have seen in the entire world. It is well furnished with large and small artillery, and of many types of guns. There are always many noble and valiant Knights, and from all the nations in the world who are every day armed and ready to fight for the Catholic faith and defend Christianity. These men often attack Turkey, and are never at peace with the Turks and infidels.

Devant laquelle ville et cite du couste de terre et comme au miliieu des deux bandes de la marine y a une petite montaigne plate laquelle montaigne est nommee et appellee la montaigne saint estienne. Et tout autour de la dicte ville et cite de Rhodes a[29] le plus beau lieu du monde pour mettre et pour poser siege. Car tout autour de ladicte ville y a beaucoup de jardins et tout plain de petites maisons eglises et chappelles de grecs vieilles murailles tant de pierres et petis roches ou lon se peut mettre a couvert contre ceulx de la ville en telle maniere que se toute lartillerie du monde estoit dedans la ville elle ne saroit faire nul mal a ceulx qui sont dehors silz ne se approuchent pres de la ville.

Or de la maniere comment vint larmee du turc et que le siege fut mis devant ladicte ville et cite de Rhodes est assavoir que le vingt et troysesme jour de may audit an mil.iiii[30] cens huitante arriverent autour de ladicte ville cent voelles ou environ cest assavoir galeres, fustes, pallendrees, gapperies, et aultres telles[31] navieres chargees de gens et de artillerie et aultres choses que[32]

leur estoit necessaire pour leur siege lesquelz prindrent port en plusieurs lieux de lisle autour de ladicte ville. Et illecques[33] descendirent en terre grant quantite de[34] turcs lesquelz incontinent et de primeface sen alerent monter sur ladicte montaigne saint estienne de laquelle lon peut veoir aucunement en aucuns lieux de la ville. et illec et tout entour dicelle et de la villemirent et tendirent leurs pavilions et descendirent en terre leurs grosses bombardes, pierres et autres engins a eulx necessaires.

Et ce fait grant partie de leursdictes navieres sen alerent au[35] Fusto qui est ung beau port de mer en turquie a x viii mille de ladicte ville de Rhodes ou avoit anciennement une grant cite de laquelle y sont encore les murailles ou quel port de fusto estoient venus par terre grant quantite de[36] turcs tant a pie que a cheval. et illec[37] passoyent sus lesdictes navieres jusques en leurdit siege devant ladicte ville de Rhodes tellement quilz furent en tresgrant nombre devant ladicte ville et cite. Et aussi est assavoir que durant ledit siege passoient tousiours gens dudit Fusto en Rhodes pour donner aucun refrechissement audit siege.

Quant le siege du turc rut ainsi mis devant ladicte ville de Rhodes comme avez oy, Monsieur le grant maistre de Rhodes nomme messire Pierre Daubusson qui avoit donne bonne provision et bonne pollice en la ville et ordonne et establi[38]

In front of the city, on the coast and as if in the middle of the arms of the sea, is a small flat-topped mountain, which is called the mountain of St. Stephen. And the town and city of Rhodes is the best place in the world to mount a siege, because all around it there are many gardens and all sorts of little houses, churches, and Greek chapels, old walls made of stones, and small rocks where one is able to take cover against the city. Thus, if all the artillery of the world were inside Rhodes, it could not do any damage to those who were in front of it, if they did not advance toward the town.

Concerning the way in which the Turk's army advanced on the city of Rhodes and laid siege to it, know that on the twenty-third day of May of the year 1480 approximately one hundred ships arrived at the town. There were galleys, fustes, pallendrees, gapperies, and other such ships full of men, artillery, and other things that they thought necessary for their siege. They anchored at several places around the island and the city. And from these vessels a great number of Turks disembarked; they immediately climbed the mountain of St. Stephen. From there they were able to see clearly all the places of the town. They reconnoitered these, as well as the town, and all its towers. At that place, they pitched their tents and unloaded their large bombards, stone balls, and the other engines they needed.

After this was done, they sent most of their ships to Physkos, which is a beautiful sea port in Turkey, eighteen miles from the town of Rhodes, where in

ancient times there was a large walled city. To the port of Physkos, a great many Turks came by land, on foot, or on horseback. From there they traveled by their ships to their siege before the town of Rhodes, where they arrived in great numbers. It is known that during the siege many reinforcements came from Physkos to Rhodes.

By the time the Turkish siege was laid before the city of Rhodes as I have said, my lord, the grand master of Rhodes, the renowned Pierre d'Aubusson, had made good preparations and organization for the town. He ordered and capitaines et gardes pour la ville et fait preparer et ordonner lartillerie et aultre[39] batons et fait mettre en ordre et en armes tous ceulx de la ville chacun en son endroit en telle maniere quil ny avoit que redire. et mesmement[40] luy mesmes[41] tousiours en armes et le premier devant se trovoit[42] chacun garde tousiours visitant et si portoit si vaillanment que Ion pourroit[43] penser.

Doncques quant ledit siege fust ainsi mis[44] devant ladicte ville aucuns des turcs tant a pie que a cheval faisans les vaillans ainsi comme silz voulsissent[45] salver ceulx de la ville par une maniere de mocquerie vindrent courre jusques aux fosses de la ville a tout grans plumes blanches[46] sur leurs testes. Mais les gens et gardes qui estoient sur les murailles et es tours de la ville qui les virent venir si pompeusement et si arrougamment[47] si pres de leurs fosses; les servirent si bien et si dru de bonne artillerie et de aultre trait quil en demoura la plus grant partie en la place qui navoyent garde de retourner en leur siege pour dire des nouvelles de la ville; ung jour quilz vindrent courre devant ladicte ville; aucuns des grecs et gens de la ville firent une saillie sur eulx et les chasserent bien loing; comme de ung trait dare. Mais ung chevalier catelan nomme messire Pierre de Bourges, parle commandement de monseigneur le maistre affin[48] que aucun inconvenient ne advint a ceulx les quieulx estoient saillis dehors de la ville saillit dehors[49] par le boulevart du palais de mondit seigneur pour faire recueillir ceulx les quieulx estoient dehors, mais il fut surprins[50] et enclos des turcs. Et il se deffendit[51] moult fort et vaillanment ung turc gecta ung dart et le frappa en la teste et le feist cheoir et tomber aterre[52] et incontinent le tuerent sur le champ et luy couperent la teste: et ne peust estre secouru asses[53] a temps de ceulx qui estoyent dehors. Mais non obstant son corps fut recours en despit de tous les turcs[54] et porte au palais de mondit seigneur le maistre et en sepulture ainsi quil appartenoit. Et tous ceulx de la ville qui estoient saiiliz se recueiliirent. stationed captains and guards for it, preparing and commanding the artillery and other guns be put in order. All the weapons of the town were each set up in its place in such way that no one could find fault. And even he himself was always armed and in the front lines, constantly checking on each guard-post and bearing himself as valiantly as could be imagined.

Then when the siege was laid before the city, several of the Turks, infantry

as well as horsemen, pretended to be valiant men. As if they intended to save those in the city, they charged up to the moat of the town in a mocking way with great white plumes on their heads. But the people and the guards who were on the walls and towers of the city saw them coming so pompously and arrogantly close to their moat; they served them so well and so faithfully with gunshot and other projectiles, that for the most part they remained in a place which prevented them from returning to their posts to give news of the town.

One day when the Turks came charging to the city, some of the Greeks and townsmen made a sally against them, and drove them away as far as an arrow flight. But by the command of the Lord Master, a Catalan knight named Pierre de Bourges sallied forth outside the town, departing by the boulevard of the Master's Palace, to gather together again those who were outside so that no accident might befall them. But he was surprised and surrounded by Turks.[1] And he defended himself most strongly and valiantly. A Turk shot an arrow that struck him in the head, causing him to falter and fall to the ground. They fell upon him and killed him immediately, and they cut off his head. He could not be helped in time by those who were outside the walls. But, nonetheless, without obstacle his body was recovered in spite of all the Turks, and carried to the palace of the Lord Master, and it was placed in a suitable tomb. And all those of the city who had sallied forth were recovered.

Peu de temps apres le siege mis le capitaine et chief de ladicte armee queles turcs nomment et appellent leur[55] Bachal feist mettre et aussi asseoir trois grossez[56] bombardes de[57] couste une[58] petite eglise fondee de saint anthoine qui est pres de ladicte ville sur le bort de lamer pour tirer et pour abatre la tour saint nicolas qui est au droit de ladicte eglise environ deux cens[59] pas en mer laquelle tour est au bout dung mole qui sault de ladicte ville au devant du port environ trois cens cinquante[60] pas en mer. Et est une tresbelle et grosse tour ronde de grosse muraille et forte, qui a despesseur par le hault vingt piez de bonne mesure. Et avec ce fit[61] mettre et asseoir es jardins dudit saint anthoine et es lieux endroit du boulevart du palais de monseigneur le maistre plusieurs aultres grosses bombardes pour batre icellui.[62]

Pendant queles Turcs affutoyent lesdictes trois grosses bombardes pour tirer contre ladicte grosse tour saint nicolas ceulx de la ville aftuterent incontinent trois de leurs grosses bombardes quilz mirent dedans la ville[63] es jardins de loberge dauvergne qui tiroyent droictement sur ceulx qui affutoyent lesdictes trois grosses bombardes devant ladicte tour saint nicolas et leur venoient de couste et leur rompirent leur[64] atodis[65] et repaires quilz faisoient pour aftuter leursdictes trois bombardes et leur firent grant mal et vexacion en telle maniere que avant quilz peussent avoir fait leur mantellet et repaire furent tue beaucoup de leurs gens.

Quant ilz furent afustez[66] et quilz commencerent a titer contre ladicte tour

ung jour bien matin sen vint au bourt du fosse du boulevart du palais de mondit seigneur le maistre ung alemant nomme maistre George qui estoit christien renye, fort excellant homme en fait dartilierie. Et de prime face quil ful arrive saltia[67] les gens de la ville moult gracieusement en leur priant quilz le missent dedans la ville et quil sen venoit rendre a monseigneur le maistre. Finablement et pour abregier fut tire a mont a une corde et mene a mondit seigneur le maistre. Ce maistre George estoit ung homme grant bien forme de tous ses membres et de belle stature beau lengagier de grant entretenement et homme fort malicieux

A short time after the siege began, the captain and chief of the army, whom the Turks called their Pasha, placed three great bombards alongside a small church named for St. Anthony (which is on the seashore close to the city) to attack and to batter the tower of St. Nicholas. The tower is to the right of the church approximately 200 paces by sea, located at the end of a mole that extends approximately 350 paces into the sea from Rhodes to the front of the port. And it is a very beautiful and massive round tower with a large strong wall which stands twenty feet high by good measure. And with this completed, they placed and set up in the gardens of St. Anthony and in the places to the right of the boulevard of the Master's Palace many other large bombards to batter it [the Tower of St. Nicholas] there.

While the Turks were readying the three large bombards to fire against the massive tower of St. Nicholas, those in the city immediately deployed three of their own large bombards, which were inside the city in the gardens of the Auberge[2] of Auvergne. These fired directly upon those who erected the three large bombards in front of the tower of St. Nicholas; they came alongside them and destroyed their taudis[3] and shields that they had made to secure their three bombards. They caused them such great harm and vexation that many of their people were killed before they were able to finish their mantlet and shield.

One morning, while the Turks were preparing their guns to fire against the tower, there came to the edge of the moat of the boulevard of the Lord Master's palace a German named Master George, who was a Christian renegade and a very excellent gunfounder. The first thing he did was to greet the people of the town, most graciously asking admission to the City and saying that he had come to speak with the Master, Finally, and to be brief, he was drawn up by a rope and led to the Master. This Master George was a man very strong in body and of good stature, a good speaker of great understanding, and a man very sly in a le veoir et oyr parler. Mondit seigneur le maistre le fit interroguer et examiner par[68] quoy il sen estoit venu lequel respondit que pour la vraye amour et zele quil avoit a la foy Christienne et aussi pour le bien et pour lutilite[69] de la ville et de tous Christiens et quil se repantoit[70] du mal quil avoit

fait davoir erre encontre la foy Christienne. Pour quoy il fut amiablement receu et le bien venu cuidant quil dit[71] verite et lui fut[72] demande des nouvelles de la facon et disposicion de larmee et du siege des turcs et aussi de la qualite et quantite diceulx et de toutes les choses que on luy demanda respondit moult prudemment[73] et moult saigement ainsi comment[74] ung homme lequel est bien conduit[75] et moult bien introduit[76] et advise et qui bien savoit parler.

Premierement disoit que du nombre des gens estant audit siege estoient environ cent septante mille hommes de toutes manieres et condicions de genes, de bombardes y avoit entre les aultres seize grosses pieces qui avoyent xxii. piez de longueur et ung pie quatre dois despesseur de metail[77] lesquelles gectoyent la pierre de neuf a unze[78] paulmes de rondeur: et six[79] gros mortiers qui gectoyent la pierre aussi grosse ou plus que lesdictes bombardes. Et grant quantite daultres[80] plus petiz batons a feu.

De la venue dudit maistre George diverses furent les opinions. Aucuns disoient quil etoit venu pour espie. Les aultres disoyent quil estoit venu pour bien et quil se repentoit. Les aultres disoient quilz lavoyent veu aultreffoys avant quil fut renye quil estoit homme cault et malicieulx et ingenieuxet quil sen faisoit bon garder. A la fin fut grant souspecion sur luy car Ion commenca a tirer dedans ladicte ville et cite de Rhodes des fleches ou il avoit ateche des escripteaux dedans lesquieulx escripteaulx avoient en escript gardez vous de maistre George. Et faignoyent les Turcs lesquieulx tiroient lesdictes fleches estre bien marris et courouces[81] de ce qu'il[82] sen estoit venu rendre a la ville. Mondit seigneur le maistre prudent et saige du tout en tout entierement commanda que his appearance and way of speaking. My Lord the Master interrogated him and asked him why he had come; he answered for the true love and zeal that he had for the Christian faith, and for the good and for the utility of the town and of all its Christians. He repented of the ill that he had done, namely, to have erred against the Christian faith. Because he was amiably received and welcomed, it appeared that he spoke truly and answered questions with information about the disposition of the Turkish army and siege, and also of their quality and the quantity. He responded most prudently and sagely to all the things asked of him, like a man well-conducted, very well briefed, and advised, and who knew how to speak well.

First he said that the number of men at the siege was approximately a hundred-and-seventy-thousand, troops of all types and conditions. Among the metal bombards, there were sixteen large artillery pieces that were twenty-two feet in length and one foot four inches in height that fired stone balls of nine to eleven palms in circumference. There were also six large mortars that fired stones as large as or larger than the bombards, and a large number of other, smaller firearms.[4]

There were diverse opinions concerning the arrival of Master George. Some

said that he had come to spy. Others claimed that he had repented and come for good. Others asserted that he was not what he seemed; that he was a duplicitous, malicious, and ingenious man, and that he should be well guarded. Finally, there was great suspicion about him, because arrows landed within the city of Rhodes that had paper attached to them, and upon the paper was written: Beware of Master George. And the Turkish archers feigned that they were very annoyed and angered that he had gone into the city. My lord Master, wise and sage in all things, ordered that Master George be ledit maistre George fut bien garde. Et la bailla en garde a six hommes et leur commands que sur paine de la vie que nuyt et jour ilz le gardassent.

Le derner jour du moys[83] de may les turcs commencerent a tirer dedans ladicte ville gros courtaulx et mortiers dont entre les aultres en tomba deux ou palais de mondit seigneur le maistre lung des quieulx persa trois estages[84] et cheut en lestable et se mist la pierre bien avant en terre. Lautre courtault tomba sur la voulte dune sale ou les freres mangeoient[85] et abatit la voulte et rompit par le millieu deux gros pilliers de marbre qui estoyent ou millieu de ladicte sale qui soustenoyent ladicte voulte que deux hommes auroyent asses affaire[86] a embrasser lung a ung coup, et persa tout oultre ladicte pierre et cheut en la cave qui estoit dessoubz sur une bocte[87] de vin quelle rompit en pieces et le vin perdu et encores[88] entra bien avant en terre maiz la dieu mercy[89] de tous les courtaulx et mortiers qui cheurent dedans ladicte ville ne firent nul mal aux gens de dedans comme il sera dit plus aplain[90] cy apres.

Quant le Bachal capitaine principal de larmee dudit siege des infideles eust este par aucun temps devant ladicte ville ou cite veu et cogneu aucunement la situacion et fortificacion dicelle selon son ymaginacion se pensa que se il povoit[91] avoir ladicte tour saint nicolas et le mole ou quel ladicte tour est assise et situee que facilement[92] apres et beaucoup plus a son aise il auroit ladicte ville. Pour quoy[93] les premiers quinze jours apres que ledit siege fut mis fist batre ladicte[94] tour fort et merveilleusement des trois grosses bombardes estant pres de ladicte eglise saint anthoine en telle maniere[95] que esditz quinze jours ladicte tour receut environ trois cens coups de bombardes et batue en telle maniere et facon que du couste de terre de la ou les bombardes tiroyent sembloit que fut ung grant tas de[96] pierres tant fur icelle tour batue et egratignee et les pierres cheutes[97] les unes sur les aultres. Mais de lautre couste de la tour cest assavoir du couste de la mer de moura saine et entiere en telle maniere quil sembloit que jamais on ny eust tire well guarded. The bailiff appointed a guard of six men, and commanded them to guard him day and night on pain of death.

On the last day of May, the Turks began to fire large courtaux[5] and mortars into the city, of which, among others, two shots fell onto the palace of the Master, one that penetrated three stories, landed on a table, and then drove

deep into the ground. And the other, a courtau shot, fell onto the vault of the room where the Knights ate. It destroyed the vault and broke two large marble pillars holding up the vault in the middle of the room. These two pillars were so large that two men could not reach around them. The stone passed through the floor and landed in the cellar underneath, onto a vat of wine that was broken into pieces, causing the wine to be lost. And it also went into the ground. But by the grace of God, none of the courtaux and mortars that were fired into the city did any harm to the people inside, as will be detailed later.

When the Pasha (the principal leader of the Turkish army besieging the city) had spent some time at Rhodes, he understood the entire fortified site. He thought he could easily take the tower of St. Nicholas and the mole where it stood, and from there capture the city. Therefore, the first fifteen days after the siege began, the three large bombards close to the church of St. Anthony battered the strong and marvelous tower. During those fifteen days, the tower received approximately 300 hits from bombards that battered it in such a way that the side facing the land where the bombards stood seemed to be a large pile of stones, since the tower was so battered and broken and the stones had fallen one on top of the other. But the other side of the tower, the side that faced the sea, remained whole and complete. It seemed not one blow from the bombards coup de bombarde si non[98] tant settlement le hault de ladicte tour ou estoyent les creneaulx qui furent du tout abatus et rues[99] en mer et de fait qui eust veu ladicte tour du couste de terre du lieu ou les bombardes tiroyent sembloit quelle ne fut pas deffensable et que personne ne se fut ose tenir dedans.

Mondit seigneur le maistre prudent et saige veant ladicte tour qui se batoit ainsi fort et que les infideles turcs tachoyent et desiroyent moult fort a la prendre cognoissant aussi que silz en estoyent les maistres quilz eussent fait grant mal et grant domaige a la ville et garde que naviere ne fut entree ne saillie du port dicelle et que ladicte ville eust este en moult grant adventure destre du tout perdue et destruite[100] delibera et ordonna que par force de chevaliers et aultres gens elle fut bien gardee et deffendue. Et mondit seigneur le maistre prudent et saige y ordonna et estabit capitaines et gardes, et aussi pareillement grant quantite de chevaliers y envoyast et daultres gens lesquels[101] mondit seigneur le maistre y envoya et y tramist pour la tuicion et aussi pour la deffense dicelle tour et mole lesquelz firent todis bastides tout autour[102] et longde ladicte tour et mole de pierres de bois touneaulx[103] et aultres vaisseaux[104] plains de terre pour ce que cest tout roc et assirent et affuterent bombardes serpentines canons coleurines[105] et aultres artilleries sur ledit mole es lieux propres et convenables si bien et si proprement qui ny avoit que redire. Et avec ce affuterent et apresterent autour de ladicte tour et mole grant quantite de petites barques et vieux lesquieux[106] estoient tous plains de

composicion de feu affin que se ilz avoyent assault fust pour faire bruler les galees fustes et aultres manieres de turcs silz approchoient de ladicte tour et mole et se tindrent sur leur garde nuyt et jour.

Le Bachal des Turcs quant il vit que la dicte tour fut ainsi fort batue que aves[107] ouy pour icelle cuider avoir le neufuiesme jour du moys de Juing[108] environ deux heures devant le jour feist venir devant ladicte tour moult grant quantite de[109] navieres, galeres, fustes, barques et pareillement aultres manieres de instrumens pour bailler lassault a icelle lesquelz commencerent a faire ung moult grant bruit en criant[110] et en invocant leur mahon et faisant grant bruit fell on it, except at the top of the tower where the crenellations were all shattered and had fallen in the sea. And anyone who might have seen the tower from the land side, from the place where the guns aimed, it would have seemed to him that it was not defensible and that no one would have dared to remain within.

My Lord Master, prudent and wise, saw the tower had been greatly demolished, and that the infidel Turks were ruining and destroying it. He knew also that losing it would make the Turks their masters, for then they could do great evil and damage to the city, and ensure that ships could not enter or leave the port. Such a scheme would defeat the city. He deliberated and ordered that the tower be well guarded and defended by a force of Knights and other people. And my Lord the Master, prudent and wise, ordered and established captains and guards. Also, in the same way, he sent and transmitted to the tower a great number of Knights, messengers, and other people to aid and defend both it and the mole. They made ramparts of stones, wooden barrels, and other receptacles full of earth around the tower and alongside the mole, for it is all rock where it is situated. They set up in suitable places on the mole bombards, serpentines, cannons, coleuvrines, and other artillery, doing this so well and properly that I do not have to talk about it again. They also laid around the tower and mole a great quantity of small boats and old casks, which were full of wood, so they could avoid assault by lighting them to set fire to any Turkish galleys, fustes, and other ships that might approach. They remained on their guard day and night.

When the Pasha of the Turks saw that the tower was as badly battered as he had heard, he brought a great many ships, galleys, fustes, barques, and other similar types of vessels before it, to assault the tower on the ninth day of the month of June approximately two hours before the morning, since it was his intention to possess it. Those in the vessels began to make a great noise, crying out and invoking Mohammed, and causing a great racket with horrible and et horribles et espoventables[111] sons de gros taborins guisternes vielles et aultres instrumens souvent huyant et tournoyant tous ensemble[112] en telle maniere quil sembloit que le del deust venir abas en tirant[113] canons et bombardes se

approucherent[114] de ladicte tour et mole et en telle façon[115] que cestoit chose horrible merveilleuse et espoventable de les oyr approucher.[116]

Finablement quant ilz furent approuches[117] de ladicte tour et mole et pres de mettre pie en terre. les gardes et les gens de ladicte tour et mole ilz faisoient bonne garde et qui bien estoient armes artilles[118] et aussi pareillement estoient bien affutes[119] les receurent si bien et si vaillanment et de si grant couraige et les servirent si tresbien et si tresdru et si fort de bombardes serpentines et tret[120] de pierres et coups de main quilz les firent bien et hastivement reculer et retourner[121] en les reboutant et reculant fort et vaillanment lesquelz mauldis turcs et infideles sen alerent et retournerent pour cest foys tous camus et tous esbahis. Mais non obstant ilz ne sceurent ne aussi pareillement ne peurent si prestement reculer ne si tost pour eulx en aler quil nen demonrast[122] audit assault sept cens de mors ou plus sans ceulx qui furent noyes[123] et nen mourut point de ceulx de ladicte tour et mole et si furent peu de blessies.

Pour laquelle victoire mondit seigneur le maistre acommpaigne[124] de plusieurs chevaliers et aultres gens sen ala rendre graces et louengez[125] a nostre dame de philarme qui lors estoit en la ville en une petite eglise de grecs pres du chasteau laquelle y avoit este pourtee avant le siege mis pour ce que son eglise est en lisle sur une montaigne environ quatre mille loing de ladicte ville de Rhodes.

Apres que le Bachal sceut que ces[127] gens avoient este ainsi villainement reboutez saches quil en fut fort desplaisant[128] et se pensa de gaster et dommaiger terrifying sounds of large taborins, gitterns, hurdy-gurdies, and other instruments, all barking and swirling together in such a way that it seemed that the sky was falling with the firing of cannons and bombards. They approached the tower and mole in such fashion that the noise of their approach was horrible, marvelous, and awful to hear.

Finally they approached the tower and mole, close enough to put a foot on the land. The guards and the people of the tower and mole made a good defense, and they were well armed, supplied, and they were well positioned besides. They stood up to the enemy well, valiantly, and with great courage, and served them very well, very violently, and very strongly with bombards, serpentines, showers of stones and blows by hand. They fought well and tirelessly; they withstood, turned, and forced them back strongly and valiantly, line evil and infidel Turks advanced and retreated, each time all discomforted and all disconcerted. But, nevertheless, they did not know how to retreat nor were they able to do so quickly; they could neither advance nor remain in place. The assault left behind seven hundred dead, and this did not take into account those who had been wounded. None of our men in the tower or on the mole were killed, and few were wounded.

For this victory my Lord Master, accompanied by many Knights and other

people, returned to give thanks and praise to our Lady of Philarmo, [the statue of whom] was at the time in the town in a small Greek Church near the castle, where it had been carried before the siege began, since its church is on one of the island's mountains located four miles away from the town of Rhodes.

After the Pasha saw that his people had been cruelly rebuffed in this manner, he became strongly displeased. He thought of ravaging and ruining the town la ville de tout son povoir et de retourner a ladicte tour par aultre maniere. Ores il est assavoir que pendant quilz tiroyent contre ladicte tour saint nicolas aussi semblablement[129] tiroient et batoyent fort le boulevart du palais de mondit Seigneur le Maistre mais pour ce que ledit boulevart si estoit tout macif et plain de terre jusques pres des crenaux et avoit dessus comme ung pre ou jardin de plaisance,[130] les pierres des bombardes non obstant quelles fussent grosses et furieusement gectees ne faisoient que ung petit egratigner[131] la muraille et en demoroit[132] beaucoup de fichees dedans.

Le Bachal doncques voyant ceci se pensa de faire remuer lesdictes bombardes, et bactre[133] la muraille de la ville en aultres divers lieux, et le fist[134] pour deux causes. La premiere pour ce que en batant la ville dautre couste et loing de ladicte[135] tour saint Nicolas se pensa que les gens de la ville se y rendroyent la plus part[136] et que ladicte tour saint Nicolas nen seroit pas si bien gardee ne deffendue.[137] lautre pour batre la muraille et emplir les fosses pour y bailler lassault et pour tacher a avoir la ville.

Doncques feist remuer et pourter huit[138] des grosses bombardes et les feist mettre et asseger[139] de lautre couste de la ville et pres[140] de lautre bande de la mer au droit de la Juifrie pour ce que cestoit le plus beau lieu et plain et uni[141] pour batre la ville et si en feist mettre et asseoir plusieurs aultres pour batre aucunes tours et aultres lieux de ladicte ville. Si[142] feist doncques batre et tirer fort et merveilleusement contre[143] la muraille de la ville audroit de la Juifrie et aultres lieulx[144] en telle maniere et facon que en peu de temps ilz le domagerent[145] fort et les turcs aussi non obstant que la muraille audroit[146] de ladicte Juifrie plus de xxviii piez despoisseur[147] et tant with all his power, and of taking the tower in another way. Now it is known that at the same time the Turks were firing against the tower of St. Nicholas, they also fired against and greatly demolished the boulevard of the palace of the Lord Master. Yet, because the boulevard was so massive and filled with earth all the way to the walls, that it was like a field or a pleasure garden, the large stones of the bombards only made a small scratch and the palace protected those inside very well.

Seeing this, the Pasha thought of moving the bombards and pounding the walls of the city in other places; he did so for two reasons. The first was that if he battered the other side of the city as he had the tower of St. Nicholas, he thought that the people of Rhodes would return fire from there, and as a result

the tower of St. Nicholas would not be as well guarded nor defended. The second reason was to batter down the walls, fill up the moat, and try to take the city by assault.

Then he removed and transported eight of the large bombards, and he set them up to attack and besiege the other side of the city, near the other seashore[6] to the right of the Jewish Quarter, because it was a very good place, flat and level, to batter the city. And he also placed and set up many other guns to pound several towers and other places in the city. Thus he battered and shot strongly and marvelously against the wall of the city to the right of the Jewish Quarter and other places in such manner and fashion that it was extremely damaged in a short time. The Turks destroyed more than twenty-eight feet of the wall to the right of the Quarter; they tirerent et batirent ladicte muraille si durement et si aprement[148] et si dru qui[149] ny avoit personne en la ville qui ne fut fort esmerveille[150] de la fureur desdictes bombardes. Et disoyent ceulx de ladicte ville que jamais ne fut veu ne ouy parler de si furieuses ne merveilleuses bombardes. Et si en[151] Rhodes de toutes manieres et nacions de gens et si dient et afferment les Chevaliers et freres[152] de la religion qui estoient pour lors au[153] Lango qui est une petite ville et ung fort chasteau[154] qui est en une petite isle a cent mille de Rhodes[155] du couste de povant. Et aussi ceulx qui estoyent au chasteau rouge qui est une autre[156] isle a cent[157] mille dudit Rhodes du couste du levant qui ouyent[158] tout a plain les coups desdictes[159] bombardes quant ilz tiroient.

Touteffoys[160] mondit seigneur le maistre et les vaillans chevaliers et aultres gens qui estoyent dedans la ville veant leurdicte muraille qui se batoit ainsi furieusement pour y mettre remede firent par dedans la ville grans todis de pierres bois et terre contre ladicte muraille et toutes les nuytz faisoyent grans todis et repaires sur ladicte muraille de clayes bois et terre touneaulx[161] plains de terre et aultres choses attendans illec lassault et si avoient ordonne et prepare illec trois ou quatre mille fagotz[162] avec souffre[163] pouldres et aultres composicions de feu pour quant ilz bailleroient[164] lassault et quilz viendroyent aux fosses les gecter sur les turcs et mettre le feu dedans en telle maniere besoignoient[165] et se fortiffioyent[166] par dedans la ville quil ny avoit personne de quelque[167] estat ne condicion quil fut qui[168] ny mist volentiers la main et estoit lors ung grant plaisir[169] fired at and shattered the wall so roughly, harshly, and vigorously, that there was no one in the city who did not marvel at the fury of the bombards. Those present swore that they had never seen nor heard of such furious or marvelous bombards. All types, nationalities, and ages of people in Rhodes affirmed this, as did the Knights and members of the Order who were as far away as Lango, which is a small town and a strong castle that is on a small island (Kos), a hundred miles from Rhodes to the west.[7] And also those who were in the Red Castle, which is on another island a

hundred miles from Rhodes to the east also heard clearly all the barrages the bombards had fired.

Nevertheless, my Lord, the Master, and the valiant Knights and other people who were within the city saw their wall had been battered so furiously. To repair it, they made within the city a great pile of stones, wood, and earth next to the wall, and all night they made on the wall large coverings and defenses of clay, wood, and earth, barrels full of earth, and other things in expectation of the assault. They prepared three or four thousand faggots with sulfur powders and other incendiary devices for the assault. They came to the ditches to fling them on the Turks and set them on fire. In this way, they did what they could to fortify themselves within the city. There was no person of any estate or condition who did not volunteer their labor, and it was at the time a great pleasure and a et une belle chose de veoir la bonne volente du peuple qui continuellement travailloit[170] pour leur fortificacion tant hommes femmes que enfans, les ungs portoyent pierres, les aultres chau les aultres bois et tous en bonne ordonnance.

Quant le Bachal vit que Ion se fortiffioit[171] ainsi fort et que le jour quant ilz avoient bien batu en ung lieu la nuyt il estoit rempli de touneaulx[172] terre bois et aultres choses; quant venoit sur le soir faisoit[173] charger ses bombardes; et la nuyt quant il pensoit que ceulx de la ville fussent sur la xnuraille pour faire leurs todis et repaires ou ilz avoyent batu de jour faisoit inettre le feu dedans et tuoytent[174] les gens et faisoyent de grans maulx a ceulx qui faisoyent lesdis[175] repaires et todis et jusques a ce quilz furent advertis de ce et sen garderent le mieulx quilz peurent.

Et aussi daultre part ledit Bachal feist afeuter[176] et mettre du couste de la montaigne saint estienne et es aultres hault lieux alentour[177] de ladicte ville plusieurs aultres bombardes et courtaulx qui tiroyent au travers de la ville pour gaster et demolir les maisons tiroyent nuyt et jour en telle maniere quil ny avoit personne qui se osast tenir en sa maison ne en la ville mais se tenoyent le plus pres de la muraille quilz pouoyent et tiroyent lesditz[178] courtaulx plus grosses pierres que ne faisoyent les bombardes et tiroient la pierre si hault en lair que on la perdoit de veue et cheoit si furieusement que en cheant elle bruyssoit en lair merveilleusement fort et en la veant cheoir ne sembloit pas plus grosse que ung esteuf et poues[179] penser que la ou elle cheoit[180] ce nestoit pas mocque et ny avoit personne qui nen tremblast[181] de paour mais par la grace de dieu peu[182] de gens furent tues[183] lesdits[184] mortiers et fault dire que ce fut comme une chose miraculeuse car communement lesditz[185] courtaulx et mortiers cheoient[186] es places vagues et es lieux inhabitables de gens et ne faisoient gueres[187] de mal si beautiful thing to see the good will of the people who continually worked for their fortification as men, women and children, some carrying stones, others limestone, yet others wood, and all in good order.

When the Pasha saw that the wall was strongly fortified, and that the place they had demolished during the day had been filled during the night with barrels of earth, wood, and other things, he loaded his bombards. That night, when he thought the townspeople were making their shields and defenses on the wall which he had pounded the day before, the bombards fired into them and killed them, doing great evil to the people who were making these defenses and shields until they were warned and were able to protect themselves better.

And also, on the other hand, the Pasha prepared several other bombards and courtaux and put them along the flank of the mountain of St. Stephen and at other high places around the city. These fired into the city to destroy and demolish houses. They fired night and day in such a way that there was no person who had the courage to remain in his house or in the city, but kept themselves as close to the walls as they could. The courtaux threw larger stones than those fired by the bombards. They fired the stone so high in the air that it was lost from view and it fell so furiously that, in falling, it hummed marvelously loud in the air. In watching it fall it did not seem larger than a tennis ball, and one might think wherever it fell it would be no more than a mockery. There was not a person who did not tremble from fear, but, by the grace of God, few people were killed by the mortars. It is wrong to say that it was like a miracle, because frequently the shot from the courtaux and mortars fell in empty spaces and in places uninhabited by people, and they did not do much damage, except non[188] a aucunes bestes mues quilz tuoient[189] pour ce que en la ville y en avoit grant foison[190] que Ion y avoit retraictes de ceulx de lisle.

Veant toutes les quelles[191] choses tout le peuple de la ville tant grans que petiz chevaliers hommes femmes et enfans estoient bien confesses[192] et repetans[193] de leurs pechez[194] et estoient tous bien ordonnes[195] come bons christiens et comme attendans de mourir de jour en jour et de heure en heure et estoyent souvent es eglises en prieres et en devocion en priant a dieu devotement quil voulsit[196] saulver eulx et la ville et deffendre de la main des faulx chiens turcs qui ainsi les parsecutoient[197] de jour en jour et de heure en heure sans aucun repos avoir: brief cestoit lors une belle chose et honnorable[198] de veoir les belles priers[199] et devocions de tout le peuple et aussi de la grant diligence quilz faisoyent nuyt et jour pour la fortificacion de leur ville et de la grant volente et grant couraige quilz avoyent pour soustenir la foy christienne.

Durant ledit siege plusieurs des gens dudit siege tant turcs que Christiens renies[200] sen vidrent rendre en la ville pour bons christiens devenir et pour aider[201] a ceulx de la ville comme ilz disoyent mais mondit seigneur le maistre qui ne se y fioit pas trop et sur toutes choses sen faisoit bien tousiours donner garde de paour de traison[202] et la venue qui se venoyent rendre les[203] faisoit

garder et diligemment[204] examiner ainsi quil appartenoit et entre les[205] aultres des Christiens renies[206] qui se vindrent rendre en la ville sen vint rendre ung lequel in[207] linterrogant fut trouve variable en son lengaige[208] parquoy il fut in

killing some of the beasts that had been driven within the town; we had a great number of them in the refuges of the island.

Seeing all these things, the people of the city, the great as well as the small, Knights, men, women, and children, made good confessions and repented of their sins and were all well ordered like good Christians, since they were expecting to die day by day and hour by hour. They were often in churches for prayer and worship, devoutly entreating God to save them and the city, and defend them from the hand of the Turks, the false dogs who persecuted them daily and hourly without any respite. It was a fine and honorable thing to observe the beautiful prayers and devotions of all the people, and also see the great diligence with which they worked night and day for the fortification of their city, and of the great desire and great courage with which they had to sustain the Christian faith.

During the siege, several people, Turkish as well as Christian renegades, surrendered themselves to the city to become good Christians, and to help the Rhodians, as they claimed; but my Lord, the Master, did not much believe them. He was always on guard against all things, particularly treason, and he put the arrivals who desired to return under guard and diligently examined them. In this way, he learned much; among the six Christian renegades who desired to return to the city, they discovered one who, when interrogated, was found to be incontinent[209] suspecione et mis en gene[210] lequel a la fin confessa quil estoit venu en la ville et avoit appourte[211] des poisons[212] pour trouver facon et maniere dempoisonner[213] mondit seigneur le maistre et que le Bachal ly[214] avoit envoye et promis que si leust peu empoisonner[215] et faire mourir[216] de luy faire beaucoup de biens et confessa beaucoup daultres choses qui seroient tropt[217] longues a raconter[218] en efFet[219] mondit seigneur le maistre luy fi[220] lier[221] une grosse pierre au col et le fist gecter en la mer et est assavoir que tous ceulx qui se vindrent rendre en la ville mondit seigneur le maistre ne sen est volu servir en aucune maniere mais les a mondit seigneur le maistre apres le siege leve mis sur une nave et les a[222] tous envoye au pape, les quieulx estoyent environ soixante.

Durant lesquelles choses les turcs tiroient et batoient[223] tousiours fort la muraille de la Juifrie et les tours[224] de la ville et si faisoyent de grans fosses et repaires et aprouches[225] parvenir[226] aux fosses de la ville: ung jour ceulx de la ville saperceurent que les turcs avoyent fait grans fosses et grans repaires au bort du fosse et gectoyent[227] grant forte[228] de[229] pierres dedans les fosses pour les emplir mondit seigneur le maistre feist saillir soixante hommes ung matin esditz[230] fosses et repaires les quieulx de grant couraige chasserent tous les

turcs qui y estoyent[231] et les firent reculer jusques en leur siege et en tuerent dix[232] dedans untruthful in his words. He was immediately suspected and put in restraint, and in the end confessed that he had come into the city with a vial of poison to find a way to poison my Lord, the Master. He said that the Pasha had sent him, and promised him that if he poisoned and killed the Master, he would give him many goods. He confessed many other things which would take too long to tell. My Lord, the Master, had a large stone bound to his neck and then flung into the sea. He made known that he would not judge all those who came to surrender into the city, but after the siege lifted, my Lord, the Master, had them all sent by ship to the pope. There were approximately sixty of them.

During these events, the Turks fired and strongly pounded all the walls of the Jewry and the towers of the city, and they made great ditches, defenses, and earthworks to reach the moat of the city. One day, those inside the city perceived that the Turks had made large trenches and defenses on the edge of the city's moat. They threw a great number of stones inside the trenches to fill them up.[8] My Lord, the Master, ordered sixty men to sally forth one morning to the ditches and defenses. With great courage they pursued all the Turks who were there, and made them retreat all the way to their camp. They slaughtered ten within lesditz[233] repaires[234] desquieulx[235] ilz apporterent[236] les testez[237] en la ville et furent mises au bouc[238] des lantes[239] sur la muraille et baillierent et mirent le feu[240] dedans leurs fosses et repaires et les abatirent de quoy les gens de la ville furent bien aises de ladicte vaillance.

Le Bachal pensant et cuidant que la pluspart des gens de ladicte ville fussent fort embesoignes[241] et occupes[242] a ladicte muraille se pensa de donner ung aultre assault a ladicte tour saint nicolas et si pensa et ymagina tous les expediens quil peust savoir pour la prendre si feist faire[243] ung pont de boctes[244] et touneaulx et aultres vaisseaux[245] bien relies[246] et galefetes[247] et li es[248] et ataches les ungs es aultres et fit par dessus clouer[249] tables planches aiz et aultres choses et si[250] le fit faire si long qui[251] povoit aler et toucher despuis[252] leglise saint anthoine jusques ala tour saint nicolas et si large que six hommes y povoyent bien aler de front sur ledit pont et estoit dung couste et daultre enpanoise et arme come[253] est une galee. Une nuyt les turcs alerent gecter sur ung petit equis une encre[254] en mer pres de ladicte tour saint nicolas ou avoit lie et atache une grosse corde dont ilz tenoient le bout[255] devers eulx pour mieulx tirer et varier leurdit pont en mer et plus a leur aise. the refuges and carried their heads into the city, and put them on the point of their lances on the wall. They directed and conducted the fire into the Turkish ditches and refuges, and they slaughtered them; therefore, the people of the town were glad for their bravery.

Thinking and believing that most of the people of the town were extremely

focused and occupied with the wall, the Pasha decided to assault the tower of St. Nicholas again, thinking he knew the best way to take it. He ordered the construction of a bridge of pontoons, barrels, and other vessels, well-connected, caulked, and bound, and connected them one to another. Tables, boards, planks, and other things were nailed on top of it. He had it made long enough to reach from the church of St. Anthony to the tower of St. Nicholas, and broad enough for six men to travel abreast on the bridge, and go armed from one shore to another as if in a galley. One night, the Turks dropped an anchor into the sea from a small skiff near the tower of St. Nicholas. They attached a large cable to it, which they held onto one end, to better haul and maneuver the floating bridge at their ease.

Mais la garde de ladicte tour qui ne dormoit pas les apperceut[256] bien si fust incontinent envoye ung maronnier qui plungea[257] et ala au fond de leau[258] couper la cable et leva lencre et fut tiree dehors et portee a monseigneur le maistre et quant les turcs virent que leur cable estoit coupee[259] et que ce quilz avoyent fait ne leur servoit de riens ordonnerent certaines quantite de barques pour mener et tirer leur pont en mer et daultre couste ordonnerent trente de leurs galeres avec grant quantite de fustes barques et aultres navieres pour gecter et mettre leurs gens en grant puissance sur le mole de ladicte tour sur lesquelles barques et navieres estoit le capitaine des galiaces du turc.[260] Le capitaine des natelies[261] et merlabay[262] gendre du filz du turc gens de grant reputacion et auctorite et plusieurs des aultres capitaines et seigneurs furent mis sur ledit pont lesquelz[263] ne retournerent pas en leurdit siege mais furent tues[264] audit assault et ceci fait ung jour apres minuyt quilz eurent afeuste toutes leurs barques mirent et varierent leurdit pont en mer et[265] mectant lung des boutz[266] devers ladicte tour saint nicolas et de lautre couste de ladicte tour du couste de la mer[267] vindrent les galeres fustes et aultres navieres en grant puissance pour eulx gecter sur ledit mole en gectant grans et espouventables[268] cris et faisoyent de moult grans bruitz de[269] tabours et aultres vielles plus quilz navoient fait pour cuider espoventer[270] et esbahir[271] les gardes et gens de ladicte tour et mole et pour leur cuider faire habandonner icelle.

Mais les nobles et vaillans chevaliers et aultres gens qui estoient sur ledit mole pour la garde dicelluy et de ladicte tour, plains de hardiesse et de bon couraige,[272] et qui bien estoyent armes[273] afeustes[274] et prepares[275] tindrent pie ferme, et

But the wakeful guard of the tower saw them. Immediately he sent a mariner who dove in, cut the cable under the water and raised the anchor. He was pulled out, and carried to my Lord, the Master. When the Turks saw that their cable had been cut, and that what they had done availed them nothing, they ordered a number of boats to carry and tow their floating bridge, and from the other coast ordered thirty of their galleys with great quantity of

fustes, barques, and other ships to transport and land their people in great power on the mole of the tower. The Turkish galley captain was with the barques and ships. The captain of Anatolia and Merlabay, son-in-law of the Turk, a person of great reputation and authority, and several of the other Captains and Lords were on the bridge. They did not return to the siege, but were killed in that assault. After midnight, when they had positioned all their boats, they moved the floating bridge, and deployed one of the ends toward the tower of St. Nicholas, and the other toward the tower on the sea shore, driving with great power the galleys, fustes, and other ships to force them to cast themselves on to the mole. By emitting great and terrifying cries, and making considerable noise with taborins, and other hurdy-gurdies, they hoped to make the guards and people of the tower and mole so afraid that they would abandon it.

But the noble and valiant Knights and other people who guarded the mole and the tower were hardy and of good courage, and they were well armed, positioned, and prepared to hold firm. They engaged the Turks receurent[276] lesditz[277] turcs si bien et si vaillanment, et si les servirent si dru de[278] bonnes bombardes et aultres traix[279] de coups de hache et de feu en telle maniere que incontinent quilz mectoyent pie en terre, ilz estoyent mors et tues,[280] et haches en pieces[281] et brules.[282] Et pour ce que ceulx dudit mole avoyent este advertis dudit pont avoyent afeutes[283] trois grosses bombardes du couste ou devoit venir ledit pont tellement que quant ledit pont flat varie et mis en mer et pres daborder a ladicte tour saint nicolas tirerent lesdictes bombardes, et fut[284] ledit pont rompu tout oultre par le millieu et mis en pieces et furent tues[285] et noye grant partie des Turcs qui estoyent dessus[286] ledit pont et des plus principaux[287] capitaines, et au regard des galeres fustes et aultres navieres plusieurs furent mises au fond de la mer de[288] coups de[289] bombardes et tous les turcs lesquieulx[290] estoyent dessus[291] mors et noyez et furent prinses neuf de leurs barques et tous les Turcs qui estoient dedans aussi mors et noyes[292] et y morurent les trois capitaines dessus nommes[293] et avoit audit assault sur ledit mole ung cordelier de saint Francoys[294] lequel fist merveille darmes car quant lesdictes barques approuchoient[295] du mole il entroit en la mer jusques a la saincture[296] et tiroit[297] les turcs hors de leurs barques et feur[298] coupoit la teste ou haschoit[299] en pieces et puis gectoit en mer brief ce fut[300] merveilles des fais darmes so well and so valiantly, and used good bombards so vigorously; others directed ax blows and fire in such a way that as soon as they [the Turks] set foot on land they were dead, killed, hacked into bits, and burned. And while those on the mole were guarding it against the attack from the bridge, the Turks were deploying the three large bombards from the shore where the bridge would be launched, so that when the aforesaid bridge was shifted and put into the sea, the bombards were fired at the tower of St. Nicholas. When

the bridge broke in the middle and then into other pieces, a great many of the Turks who had been on the bridge and their principal Captains were killed and drowned. Many of the galleys, fustes, and other ships were sent to the sea bed by blows of the bombards, and all the Turks in them were killed and drowned. There were nine barques captured and all the Turks with them were also killed and drowned; the three Captains named above died also.

I heard that during the assault on the mole, a Franciscan friar, in what was a great marvel of arms, waded into the sea up to his cincture when the boats approached the mole. He pulled the Turks out of their boats, hit them on their heads or hacked them into pieces, and then flung them into the sea. As brief as his wonderful feats of arms were, quil faisoit ainsi[301] que lafferment ceulx qui luy virent faire les grans coups touteffois a la fin il fut fort naure et blecie[302] mais mondit seigneur le maistre le feist bien penser et quant[303] il fut guery[304] luy donna et feist faire ung habillement tout neuf et furent lesditz[305] turcs de rechief villainement reboutes[306] et plus quilz navoient este la premiere foys[307] et dura ledit assault depuis peu apres la minuyt jusques a dix heures du matin et y furent tues[308] deux mille cinq[309] cens[310] turcs et plus et des principaux[311] capitaines et seigneurs qui fussent audit siege et pareillement[312] grant foyson lesquieulx[313] furent naures[314] et blecies et ne fut tue de ceulx dudit mole que unze ou douze deux freres chevaliers mais il y en eust beaucoup de bleciez.[315]

Apres[316] laquele victoire mondit seigneur le maistre acompaigne de plusieurs chevaliers et aultres gens sen ala rendre graces et louenge[317] a dieu et a nostre[318] dame de philerne et a monseigneur saint Jehan baptiste de la grace que dieu leur faisoit de obtenir victoire a lencontre[319] de leurs ennemis et quant le Bachal vit que ses gens avoyent este de reches[320] ainsi villainement reboutes[321] et quil avoit tant perdu de gens et des meilleurs de grant douleur et melencolie[322] quil eust sen ala mettre en son pavilion ou il fut lespace de trois jours sans vouloir parler a personne de ses gens. those who saw them assert that he struck hard blows. When it was over he was badly wounded and hurt. The Master thought well of the deed, and gave him the reward of having a brand new habit made.[9]

Once again, the Turks were beaten back, and they were as horribly wounded as the first time. The assault lasted from a little after midnight until ten in the morning. There were two thousand five hundred Turks killed and more, including the principal captains and lords who were at the siege. An equally great number of people were wounded and hurt. Of those stationed on the mole, only eleven or twelve of the brother Knights were killed, but also there had been many wounded.

Alter the victory my Lord, the Master, accompanied by many Knights and other people, went to give thanks and praise to God and to Our Lady of Philermo, and to St. John the Baptist, for the grace that God gave them to

obtain a victory over their enemies in the encounter. When the Pasha saw that his people once again had been violently beaten back, and that he had lost so many men and officers, he had such great pain and melancholy that he went into his tent, where he stayed for three days without speaking to any of his people.

Apres peu de temps vint le jour de la feste monseigneur[323] saint Jehan baptiste qui est le xxiii. e sine jour de[324] Juing[325] patron de ladicte Ville et Cite de Rhodes la veille de laquelle feste et pour la louenge[326] et solennite[327] dicelle est de bonne constume[328] faire graus[329] feuz pour quoy ceulx de la ville firent la nuy t grans feus[330] sur toutes les tours de ladicte ville et sur les clochiers et aultres lieux haulx de ladicte ville les turcs veans[331] lesdis feux si grans et en tant de[332] lieulx[333] ne savoient pas aquelle fin ceulx de la ville les faisoient et se aproucherent[334] des fosses pour veoir que cestoit. Ores ceulx de la ville le jour avoient charge et afeuste[335] toute lartillerie de la ville pour la tirer a ung coup[336] pour ladicte solennite[337] lesquelz[338] incontinent que les feux furent faiz tirerent et desemparerent ladicte artillerie[339] toute a ung coup[340] mais si bien advint qui! fut bien tue environt[341] trois cens turcs de ladicte artillerie de ceulx qui cestoyent[342] aprouches[343] du fosse.

Quant ledit Bachal eust perdu[344] lesperance davoir ladicte tour sainct nicolas et que tout ce quil y avoit fait ne luy servoit de riens fist faire a grant puissance trenchees fosses et aprouchcs[345] devant la muraille de la Juifrie qui estoit fort batue en telle maniere que les turcs venoyent a couvert jusques pres du fosse en faisant fort emplir les fosses de pierres de bois et aultres[346] choses mondit

The twenty-fourth day of June, the feast day of St. John the Baptist, patron of the town and city of Rhodes, occurred a short time later. It is the custom to make great bonfires the day before the feast, the vigil, and the celebration. That night the people of the city made great fires on all the towers of the city, the steeples, and other high places. The Turks saw the great fires in many places. Not knowing what they were, or that the Rhodians had made them, they approached the moat to investigate. However, the Rhodians had loaded and prepared all the artillery of the city to fire a round in honor of the celebration. When the fuses were lit, they immediately fired the guns and discharged all the rounds at once. Thus, they killed about three hundred Turks who had been approaching the moat with the guns.[10]

When the Pasha had lost hope of taking the tower of St. Nicholas, and when all he had done had come to nothing, he made big, stout trenches, ditches, and earthworks before the greatly demolished wall of the Jewry so that the Turks might come up close to the moat under cover. At the same time, they filled up the moat with stones, wood, and other things. seigneur le maistre veant lesdictes trenchees et aprouches[347] et que lartillerie de la ville ne leur povoit faire nul mal feist faire tribus de bois qui est ung engin qui gect[e]r[348] une

grosse pierre par[349] paine et leur en fist gecter fouvent[350] et dru tellement[351] quil leur fut effondre et abatu beaucoup de leurs aprouches[352] et repaires et tousiours y demouroit quelque ung[353] turc mort dessoubz et leur faisoyent lesditz[354] tribus grant mal et domaige et si faisoit mondit seigneur le maistre vuider[355] les pieres[356] des fosses et tirer en la ville en toute diligence.

D'ung jour ledit maistre George fut amene sur ladicte muraille en luy monstrant la muraille qui estoit moult fort batue et les repaires et aprouches[357] des turcs en luy demandant son[358] opinion et quil luy ensembloit et il respondit que lartillerie des turcs estoit si furieuse et si puissante[359] que muraille du monde narresteroit[360] devant quelque espesseur quelle eust et luy sembloit que la ville estoit en grant dangier veu[361] les tranchees[362] aprouches et les fosses qui semplissoient[363] fort et la grant quantite de[364] turcs qui estoyent devant et de tout ce que on luy demanda respondit moult laschement au moins chose ou il ny avoit epparence[365] et luy fit Ion tirer deux ou trois coups de bombarde. mais il ny fit chose qui vaulsit[366] en la fin fut suspecione[367] car Ion tiroit tousiours[368] en la ville fleches[369] on[370] avoit en escript gardes[371] vous de maistre George por

My Lord Master saw that the artillery of the town could not damage or harm these trenches and earthworks. He ordered the construction of a wooden trebuchet, which is an engine with a sling that throws a large stone. [The trebuchet threw stones] fiercely and violently, and greatly shattered their earthworks and defenses, killing the Turks within. The trebuchet did great harm and damage. The Lord Master removed the stones of the moat, and hauled them into the town with all diligence.

One day, Master George was taken on the wall. They showed him where it was badly damaged, and the defenses and earthworks of the Turks. They asked his opinion, and he answered them that Turkish artillery was so furious and so powerful that no wall in the world, no matter what material they added to it, could stand up to it. It seemed to him that the town was in great danger, in view of the trenches, earthworks, and ditches, and the large number of Turks who were in front of them. He answered all they asked him in a cowardly manner, or at least it had that appearance. He made them fire two or three rounds of the bombard, but it did not hit anything that mattered. He was suspected in the end because arrows shot continuously into the city had a message written on them: "Beware of Master George." quoy il fut mis en la gehine et en effet[372] confessa comment il avoit Ja servi le tourc long temps du quel il avoit eu beaucoup de[373] biens et comment il avoit fait avoir au turc par traison[374] beaucoup de[375] villes et de[376] cites[377] par plusieurs manieres et que le turc luy avoit promis faire plus de biens quil navoit jamais eu sil luy povoit faire avoir Rhodes et que par ceste cause il sen estoit venu en la ville pour trouver facon et maniere de trahir ladicte ville et confessa beaucoup daultres choses qui seroyent trop longues a raconter[378] et pour ce que ceulx de ladicte

ville parloient[379] fort que ledit maistre George feust excecute mondit seigneur le maistre qui le voloit garder plus longuement pour tousiours savoir quelque chose[380] de luy pour ce que cestoit ung homme fort espert et savant en toutes choses le feist pendre et estrangler en la place au millieu de ladicte ville et cite de Rhodes devant tous ceulx de ladicte ville pour contenter et pour donner meilleur couraige a tous ceulx de ladicte ville et cite de Rhodes Et pour esbahir[381] et decouraiger les mauldis et infidelis turcs.

Le Bachal pour mieulx cuider faire son fait fit tirer dedans la ville des lectres qui disoyent que Ion se rendit a luy et quil donneroit a tout homme la vie saulve et a chescun tous ces biens et quil ne vouloit seulement que la ville et ne leur demandoit aultre chose desquelles lectres mondit seigneur le maistre ne les aultres chevaliers ne gens de la ville ne tindrent pas grant compte mais comme bons et vaillans chevaliers et bons christiens navoient garde de y obtemperer mais avoyent bon et ferme propos et volente comme bons et vrays[382] catholiques de bien garder la ville et de leur tenir bon pie et ferme et desia ilz leur avoyent bien monstre comme avez ouy[383] et avoyent bien entencion[384] de leur monstrer encores mieulx sils[385] approuchoient de leur muraiile et de leurs fosses.

Ung jour que ceulx de la ville estoyent sailiis dehors pour faire une course sur ledit siege de la male adventure les turcs prindrent ung frere et ung de ceulxn He was put in the dungeon, and there he made a confession how he had served the Turk for a long time, for which he had received many rewards, and how, by several means of treason, he had given the Turk many towns and cities; and that the Turk had promised him better rewards than he had ever seen if he helped him take Rhodes. For this reason, he had come into the town to find a way to betray it well, and he confessed to many other things that would be too long to relate. For these reasons, the people of Rhodes said that Master George should be executed. My Lord Master, who wanted to keep him longer to learn all the things he knew because he was very experienced and skillful in many things, had him publically hanged in the middle of the city of Rhodes, to satisfy everyone and to give them courage, and to frighten and discourage the evil and infidel Turks.

To better achieve his ends, the Pasha hurled within the city some letters that encouraged the people to surrender to him. He would give all men their life and security for all their goods. He did not want anything except the city, and he demanded from them no other thing. Neither my Lord Master, nor the other Knights, nor the people of the city held these letters of great account. Instead, like good and valiant Knights and good Christians, they did not drop their guard and comply. They had a good and firm purpose and, like good and true Catholics, the will to guard the town, and to maintain their good strong hold. They desired to stand up to him, and if the Turks approached their wall and

their moat again they had every intention their second rally would be better.

On the day that some of the defenders made a failed excursion on the Turkish siege works, the Turks captured a Knight and one of the Rhodians by chance. de la ville lesquieulx[386] furent mis au pal au bort[387] du fosse avec ung aultre de ceulx de la ville qui sen estoit ale[388] rendre a eulx et pour ce quilz cuidoyent quil y fust[389] ale[390] pour espie[391] comme dieu le voloit le mirent au pal qui est une maniere de martire que les turcs font aux christiens pour les faire morir plus angoisseusement[392] et a plus grant martire. quant mondit seigneur le maistre vit quilz les avoient mis au pal le lendemain fit mettre cinq turcs quils[393] avoient prins semblablement[394] au pal lesquels[395] il fit picquer et mettre hault sur la muraille a la veue de tous les turcs en leur demonstrant que pour ung christien quilz y mettroyent[396] il y en mectroit deux turcs.

Quant le Bachal vit et apperceut que pour lettres[397] ne pour traictres ne pour aultres choses quil peut faire tout ne luy servoit de riens ung jour envoia[398] ung grec renie qui estoit de Rhodes qui aultreffoys[399] sen estoit ale[400] rendre turc vint en une eglise de grecs nommee nostre dame des limonistres qui est pres du fosse de la ville et appella les gardes qui estoient sur la muraille en leur disant que le Bachal la voit[401] envoye pour dire a monseigneur le maistre que le Bachal parleroit volentiers a luy et quilz donnassent saulconduit[402] lung a lautre pour parlamenter ensemble[403] a quoy fut respondu au grec que lendemain il vint au bort du fosse et que la[404] il parleroit a lui[405] le Bachal ny ala point mais son ambassade y ala a laquelle monseigneur le maistre ne se volut point monstrer ne parler a eulx mais ordonna le chastelain de la ville nomine messire anthoine gautier qui est ung bon chevallier et homme de bien pour respondre a ladicte ambassade et premierement lambassade du Bachal They impaled both on at the edge of the moat, along with one from the city who had surrendered to them, because he had gone to spy on them. As God wishes it, they marveled at the impaling, which is a manner of martyrdom that the Turks perform on Christians to make their death more agonizing and a greater martyrdom. When the Lord Master saw that they had been impaled, he ordered on the following day that five Turks should be impaled. They were staked high on the wall in sight of all the Turks to show them that for each Christian they killed he would kill two Turks.[11]

When the Pasha saw that neither the letters, nor the traitors, nor any other thing he did achieved anything, he sent one day a Greek deserter (who had been from Rhodes but who had gone over to the Turks in times past), who came to a Greek Church called our Lady of Mercy, which is close to the moat of the city, and called to the guards on the wall in their language that the Pasha had sent an envoy to speak to the Master; that the Pasha wished to parley with him; and that they would be given a safe conduct for one other person to talk to him. The Greek was told that the next day someone would

come to the edge of the moat, and there this person would speak to him. The Pasha did not go to the meeting, but his ambassador did. The Master did not wish to show himself or speak to him, but ordered the Castellan of the city, Fra Anthony Gaultier, a good Knight and a good man, to respond to the ambassador.12 commenca a parler et a dire ces mots ou semblables406 en effect et soustance 407 messeigneurs il nous semble408 quil feust409 bon et licite pour vous et pour la ville que monsieur410 le maistre et vous aultres chevaliers de la ville feissies paix et union avec nostre sire le grant turc et son Bachal et que seroit le grant bien et proffit de la ville et de ceulx de dedans et sey voles411 entendre nous le tracterons412 par la mcillieur413 maniere que nous pourrons adviser et nous esbaissons fort comment monsieur414 le maistre et vous de la ville oses415 resister a ung si puissant prince comme est nostre seigneur le turc lequel de son temps a416 conquis grant quantite de417 belles terres et de418 beaux419 pais et grans comme deux empires .xii.420 royaulmes et plusieurs aultres seigneurs en vous advertissant ainsi que ayes pitie421 de vous et de votre ville et que ne vous laissies422 pas faire si cruelles choses comme fait faire le Bachal a ceulx dune ville quant il la prent423 par force et plusieurs choses disoient qui seroient trop longues a escripre.

Monsieur le chestelain424 commis de respondre comme dit est425 respondit en ceste426 maniere. Mais saiches427 que monseigneur le maistre et nous de ceans sommes fort esmerveilles de votre428 Bachal et de vous qui estes venus icy en si grant puissance et aves429 tant de430 si bonne et belle artillerie et

First, the Pasha's ambassador began to parley and to say these words or some similar to them in meaning and substance: "Sirs, it seems to us a good thing for you and for the city that the Master and your other Knights should make peace and forge a union with our lord, the Great Turk, and his Pasha, and that there will be great benefit and profit for the city and of those inside it. If anyone wants to surrender, we will treat him in the best manner that we can. We were greatly astonished at how the Lord Master, and you townspeople, choose to resist such a powerful prince as our Lord, the Turk, who in his time conquered a great many beautiful and powerful lands and countries: two empires, twelve kingdoms, and many other lordships." "You are warned," [the messenger said] "to take pity on yourself and your city, and that you should not permit such cruel things that the Pasha will do to the people when the town is taken by force."13 He said many other things that it would take too long to write.

The Castellan, who responded to this as I have said, answered in this manner: "But you know that the Master and we are very amazed with your Pasha, and with you who have come here in such great power, with so much fine artillery tant daultres engins et qui estes vaillans gens en grant nombre et qui estes si puissans comme dictes que est votre431 seigneur le turc come432

vous nous exortes[433] a faire paix et union avec luy et puis daultre part vous nous menasses[434] nous ne savons se le faictes pour esprouver[435] nos[436] couraiges[437] et voulentes[438] mais saiches que tout ce que nous aves dit[439] et tout ce que vous nous aves[440] fait par devant ne nous meuvent point a faire chose qui soit deshonneste a nostre foy et a nostre religion.

Ne vos menasses ne nous font aucunement paour nous sommes tous ungs en couraige et creons fermement en nostre seigneur jesu chrisc[441] qui est[442] vray dieu et pour lequel sommes[443] tous prest[444] et apareilles[445] de combatre et inourir pour luy et piustoist[447] que estre conioings[448] a vostre Mahon qui est une loy faulce[449] et mauvaise que vous tenes[450] et la nostre est bonne et Juste[451] et de tout nostre pouoir[452] la garderons. puis que estes venus en grant puissance parfaictes ce quaves[453] commence et en la grace Jesu Christ[454] nous vous respondrons si bien et de si bon couraige que vous cognoistres[455] que vous naves point affaire[456] aux aziens[457] ne a gens de meschant couraige et and many other engines, and who are valiant people in great number; and if your Lord Turk is as powerful as it is said, why do you exhort us to make peace and union with him, and then threaten us. We do not know if our deeds prove our courage and will; but know you that all that you have said to us, and all that you have done here, does not drive us to do a thing that is harmful to our faith and to our religion; nor do your threats make us fear at all.

We are all one in courage, and we believe fervently in our Lord Jesus Christ who is the true God, and for whom we are all prepared and ready to fight and to die; and rather than join with your Mohammed, whose law that you hold is false and evil, we will keep with all our power our law, which is good and right. Since you have come in great power, complete what you have begun: and in the grace of Jesus Christ, we will respond to you so well and with such good courage, that you will know that you do not deal with Asians, or with people lacking in dictes a vostre Bachal qui est si hardi[458] et qui fort aime[459] le proffit du turc son seigneur quil ne despende plus tant quil fait pour tirer ses bombardes et mortiers mais quil sen vienne[460] a toute sa puissance et que les deux portes de la ville quil eslira luy seront ouvertes a plain et face du mieulx quil pourra. Quant les embassadeurs[461] du Bachal virent quilz ne peurent avoir aultre responce baisserent les testes et sen alerent a leur Bachal compter la responce quilz avoyent eue de ceulx de la ville.

Quant le Bachal eust entendu la responce rat fort couroce[462] contre ceulx de la ville et plus quil navoit este et Jura[463] sur son[464] mahon que sil povoit prendre la ville quil nen saulveroit pas ung que tous ne fussent mis au pal et fit faire .iiii. cens paulx[465] tous propres et fit en grant diligence batre les murailles de la ville et faire fosses aprouches[466] et emplir les fosses et monstrer a ceulx de la ville environt deux[467] cens eschelles faignant quilz voulsissent prendre la ville par eschelles affin que ceulx de ladicte ville sespandissent plus au long de

la muraille et quil ny en y eust[468] pas tant a ladicte Juifrie ou ilz batoyent.

Le xxvi jour de Juillet batit fort et merveilleusement la muraille de ladicte Juifrie et les tours prouchaines[469] des huit[470] grosses bombardes sans aucun repos en telle maniere que la muraille fut razee et batue au rez du fosse et le fosse Illec au droit tout empli[471] de pierres par telle maniere que ung homme a cheval fut bien monte du couste des champs sur la muraille de la ville tant fut batue et razee et le fosse emply le[472] lendemain qui fut[473] le Jeudi[474] et .xxvii. jour de Juliet[475] devant le jour commencerent a tirer si fort et si asprement que en peu de temps tirerent bien cens[476] coups de bombardes grosses et si courage. Say to your Pasha, who is so bold and who so loves the profit of the Turk his Lord, that he should not dispatch his bombards and mortars to fire, but that he should come himself in all his glory, and whichever of the city's two harbors he chooses, one will open to him, and he can do the best that he will."

When the ambassadors of the Pasha saw that there would be no other response, they bowed their heads and returned to their Pasha to recount to him the answer that they had from the city.

When the Pasha heard this response, he became very irate with the Rhodians, and swore by Mohammed that if he should capture the city that he would spare no one, and that all would be put to the stake. He ordered four hundred stakes for the purpose. He battered the walls of the city with great diligence, dug approaching ditches, filled up the moat, and erected two hundred ladders around the city. He planned to capture Rhodes using ladders placed along the city wall. Most of them were at the Jewish Quarter, where the walls had been pounded.

On the twenty-sixth day of July, he strongly and marvelously battered the wall of the Jewish Quarter and nearby towers with eight large bombards, without stopping and in such a way that the wall was demolished and damaged all the way to the moat. The moat itself was so completely filled with stones that a man mounted on a horse could cross from the edge of the field to the wall of the city. The moat was refilled the following day, which was Thursday the twenty-seventh day of July. They began before daybreak without interruption, so strongly and violently, that in a short time they fired one hundred blows with the large bombards. They aimed high tiroyent communement hault pour desloger[477] les gens et les gardes de dessus[478] la muraille et pur[479] rompre les todis et repaires que ceulx de la ville avoyent fait la nuyt sur la muraille batue et pendant que ilz tiroyent ainsi fort les turcs se aprouchoyent[480] des fosses en moult grant puissance par leurs todis repaires et aproches[481] tellement quilz estoient pres du fosse en moult grant[482] nombre et tant quilz ne se povoient[483] nullement contourner en leurs aprouches les ungs[484] pour les aultres et ceulx[485] de la ville ne les apperceurent point aproucher[486] pour ce quilz ne se osoyent tenir sur la muraille ne en lieu hault

pour la fureur des bombardes mais estoient bas ou ilz avoient fait leurs repaires et y demoura peu de gens car la plus grant[487] partie reposoit pour le travail[488] quilz avoient des estodis les aultres servoient dieu et cuidoient quilz deussent tirer comme ilz avoient acostume.[489] quant il fut jour comme une heure apres soleil levant et quilz eurent tire environt cens[490] coups des bombardes tirerent ung mortier pour leur[491] signal et incontinent les turcs qui estoient pres du fosse en grant puissance saillerent hors de leurs approuches et monterent incontinent sur la muraille tellement que en peu deure[492] furent sur[493] ladicte muraille environt[494] deux mille cinq[495] cens turcs et plus, et furent ceulx de la ville ainsi soubdainement surprins[496] et fault bien dire quil[497] y eust grant faulte du couste de ceulx de la ville pour ce quilz ne se tenoient pas bien sur leur garde mais dieu les garda et preserva ainsi que ores[498] to dislodge the men and the guards atop the wall, and to break the shields and defenses that the townspeople made on the battered wall during the night. While the townspeople labored, the Turks in very great force advanced from their shields, defenses, and earthworks. When the Turks appeared before the moat in such great numbers, the townspeople could not turn back their advance [anymore]. The townspeople did not jump down to approach them, because then they could not defend the wall; nor could they go higher from the fury of the bombards. They remained below or they took to their refuges. Few people were killed, because most were protected when they rested from their work; the others served God and took shelter from the fire as they had become accustomed to. After it was day, one hour after sunrise, and after they had fired around one hundred shots from the bombards, a single mortar fired as a signal. Immediately the Turks who had been massing close to the moat sallied out of their approaches and scaled the wall, so quickly that soon there were more than two thousand five hundred Turks on the wall. The people of the city were quickly surprised, and some said that those on the wall did not keep good guard, but God saved them and preserved them in this manner. de prime face que les turcs eurent ainsi gaigne[499] la muraille et quilz furent dessus en grant nombre sans trover[500] aucune resistance misrent[501] et assirent le grant estendart[502] du turc sur une tour quilz avoient Ja[503] gaigne et[504] si xnirent plusieurs autres estendars[505] et bandieres sur la muraille et rebouterent les turcs qui y estoyent en si[506] grant puissance et ne les virent aucunement jusques a tant quilz montoyent sur la muraille car il ny avoit celluy qui se osast montrer tant avoient les turcs furieusement tire tout le matin touteffois[507] la trompete[508] sonna incontinent et lors eussiez[509] veu les chevaliers et gens de la ville saillir en armes.

Mais quant vint a monter sur la muraille trouverent que les turcs gardoient[510] les montees de la muraille et estoient maistres de leur artillerie et aultres armes estant sur icelle Et lors eussies veu faire de belles armes car les

gens de la ville qui estoyent deffendeurs furent lors assailleurs car de grant couraige gaignerent les degres[511] pour monter amont[512] et pour regaigner leur muraille a coups de[513] lances de voulges et de trait montoient[514] amont[515] faisant grans armes et les turcs qui estoyent sur ladicte muraille se deffendoyent fort et asprement en tirant fleiches et aussi en gectant pierres et tout ce quilz povoyent[516] sur ceulx de ladicte ville de Rhodes et aussi pareillement estoyent lesditz[517] turcs si espes sur ledicte[518] muraille qui nuysoyent et empechoyent les ungs aux[519] aultres et ne se pouoyent

The first time that the Turks reached the wall in this way, they went over it in great numbers without finding any resistance. They unfurled and set up the great standard of the Turk on the one tower that they had just won. The Rhodians saw several other standards and banners on the wall, and they resisted the Turks who had attacked with such great power. They did not see the Turks until they climbed the wall because they were not able to, so furiously had the Turks fired all morning. Nevertheless, the trumpet sounded immediately, and the Knights and the townspeople sallied forth under arms.

But when it came to go up on the wall, they found that the Turks held the parapets of the wall, and they had captured their [the Rhodian] artillery and the other arms that were up there. Those present witnessed a fine feat of arms, because the defenders of the town were like the attackers. With great courage, they climbed up by degrees to retake their wall, fighting with blows of lances, of vouges, and of arrows.

The Turks on the wall defended themselves strongly and spiritedly by firing bolts, hurling stones and and throwing all they could down upon the people of Rhodes. Moreover, the Turks were so densely spaced on the wall that they could not strike. They were encumbered by each other, and were not able to avoid each contourner et en tumba[520] beaucoup de dessus[521] la muraille en la ville qui furent tues[522] et mis en pieces.

Mondit seigneur le maistre qui nestoit pas loing a compaigne de[523] plusieurs chevaliers et aultres gens vint a lune des montees et commenca a monter le premier et de grant couraige montoit a mont faisant armes merveilleuses mais en montant receut de[524] grans et mausvais[525] coups et aussi en donna il de[526] bons et fut gecte deux ou trois foys[527] de la montee abas mais il fut vaillanment secouru et releve des aultres chevaliers qui estoyent avec luy tous lesquelz se porterent si bien et si vaillanment que par force et en despit de tous les turcs monterent sur la muraille et illec monseigneur le maistre blecie en deux lieux quant ceulx de la ville furent rnontes[528] sur la muraille eussies veu faire merveilles darmes. car Ilz combatoient[529] illec main a main et vaillanment. mais monseigneur le maistre feist desploier[530] une bandiere en la quelle[531] estoit en painture le cruxefiz[532] estandu[533] en larbre de la croix nostre dame dung couste et saint Jehan baptiste daultre couste et quant les turcs

virent la bandiere desployee commencerent a baisser la teste comme silz ne vissent[534] gouste[535] et saulter[536] du hault en bas sans faire aucun semblant[537] de eulx deffendre et les tuoit on et assommoit comme pourceaux et eulx mesmes[538] tuoyent lung lautre car ceulx qui venoient les derniers pour venir a la ville trouvoient[539] les aultres qui sen fuoyent et frappoyent dessus[540] comme sus chiens brief il yeust[541] si grant tuerie de[542] turcs other. Many fell from the top of the wall into the city, where they were killed and cut into pieces.

My Lord Master, who was not far away, accompanied by several Knights and other people, came at once to the heights, and began immediately to climb. With great courage he climbed up carrying out marvelous feats of arms. But in climbing he received great and bad blows, and also gave some good ones. Two or three times he was thrown down from the wallwalk, but was valiantly helped by the Knights who were with him, all of whom supported him so well and so valiantly that in spite of the Turks they climbed the wall. There, the Lord Master was wounded in two places.

When the Rhodians had climbed on the wall, it seemed that they performed marvelous deeds of arms, because they fought there valiantly hand to hand. The Lord Master displayed a banner on which was painted the crucified Christ, with our Lady on one side and St. John the Baptist on the other. When the Turks saw the banner unfurled, they began to hang their heads like someone who had seen a ghost, and, jumping down, they stopped any pretense of defending themselves. The townsmen stabbed and slaughtered them like pigs. Likewise, the Turks killed one another, because those who came last off the wall killed those who went before, snapping at each other like dogs. The slaughter of the Turks was a que ce fut merveilles et fut le grant estendart[543] du turc gaignc[544] lequel estoit de soie[545] vermeille et dessus une pomme dor faicte a maniere dung cueur plat et large de une paulme ou plus et si furent tous les aultres estendars[546] et bandieres qui estoyent sur ladicte muraille gaignes car en leur en retournant[547] ilz neurent pas le loysir[548] de les prendre et retourner tant furent de pres chasses[549] de ceulx de la ville. Mais au venir gaignerent lestendart[550] de monseigneur lospitalier qui estoit lung des capitaines generaulx de la ville fut[551] toute la gaigne que lesditz[552] turcs firent laquelle leur fut bien chier vendue en effect audit assault tous ceulx de la ville tant hommes que femmes si[553] porterent si bien et si vaillanment que ce fut merveilles aussi en avoyent ilz bien besoing et ny avoit gueres[554] celluy qui nen portast des enseignez[555] car ilz tiroient si dru que les murailles des maisons au droit dudit assault estoient si picquotees de leur trait tant y a frappe que il semble[556] encores a les veoir chose merveilleuse et dura celluy assault environ deux heures.

Apres ledit assault passe lesditz turcs se reculerent bien loing de la ville sans ce que oncques[557] puis approuchassent de la ville autmoins si pres quilz avoient

de coustume et recullerent leurs grosses bombardes et se tindrent ensemble et serres comme berbis[558] et incontinent ceulx de la ville saillirent dehors es fosses pour visiter ceulx qui estoient demoures[559] mors et aussi pour achever de tuer ceulx qui estoient encores[560] vifs[561] et qui nestoyent que naures et qui[562] ne sestoyent peu recueillir avec les autres[563] et fut trouve dedans la ville que mors que vifz marvel, and the Rhodians gained the grand standard of the Turk, which was of red silk, and on the top part was a golden apple made like a flattened heart, and it was a palm or more in width. Our men won all the other standards and banners that were on the walls, too, because the Rhodians chased them so quickly the Turks did not have the time to take them. But the Turks gained the standard of Monsignor the Hospitaller,[14] who was one of the Captain Generals of the city. It was the only one they won, and seemed to them well done.

During that assault, the townspeople, both men and women, comported themselves so well and valiantly that it was marvelous. They did what was necessary, and there were not many who did not bear some wound. Also, they fired so violently that the walls of the houses to the right of the assault were peppered from a distance. To behold them again was a marvelous thing. The length of the assault was around two hours.

After the assault ended the Turks withdrew well away from the city, more than one day's march, and they withdrew their large bombards and pulled them together herded like sheep. Immediately, the Rhodians sallied outside in the moat to attack them, to kill those who were dying and those who were recovering. They did not spare the wounded or those who did not retreat with the others. One hundred thirty-three dead and living were found cent trente trois et les plus beaux[564] hommes que Ion peut regarder[565] lesquelz on fit trainer et gecter en mer pour[566] les esclaux et dedans les fosses et autour diceulx furent trouvez mors environt[567] trois mille cinq[568] cens ou plus sans ceulx qui furent naures[569] quilz emporterent qui depuis moururent[570] en grant nombre comme on a sceu depuis et fault dire quil en mourut[571] beaucoup car au[572] lieu ou estoit leur siege en .iii.[573] lieux et de grans champs ou avoit terre labourable estoient tous plains[574] de[575] fosses ou ilz ont enterre leurs gens mors et ou ilz faisoient leurs sementieres et a les veoir maintenant semble[576] que Ion y ait fait les fosses pour y planter vigne et furent les turcs qui furent trouvez mors au fosses furent brules[577] et mis ou feu dedans le bois quilz avoient aporte[578] pour leurs approuches et emplir les fosses et tant en y avoit quilz mirent plus de huic[579] jours a bruler et les bonnes femmes qui les veoyent bruler et rendre[580] la grece les mauldisoient[581] et disoyent quilz estoient si gras des figues et aultres fruites quilz leur avoient menge en leurs Jardins et aultres chose ne plaignoient. De ceulx de la ville en fut trouve de mors environt[582] xl[583] desquelz y avoit quinze[584] freres des plus notables commandeurs qui pour

lors y fussent dont ce fut domaige et y eust plus de cinq[585] cens de blecies brief ce fut merveilles des vaillances et faiz darmes et chose fort a croire de ce qui fut fait[586] ce jour qui ne la veu et comme below the city, and the finest men, rather than the slaves, dragged and flung the dead into the sea. Inside and around the moat they found 3,500 or more dead, not counting those wounded that they carried oft who since then have died in great numbers.

It is hard to say how many died in all, because they established their siege in three places, and if their site had large fields or arable land the Turks were buried in pits, or they buried their dead in their ditches which they made into their cemeteries. To see these ditches, it looked like they had made them to plant vines there. The Turks who were found dead in the ditches were cut up and and they had set them on fire with wood that they had brought for their approaches. There were so many that it took days to burn them, and the women who saw them burn gave thanks, cursed them, and hurled at them rotten figs and other fruits from their gardens.

Forty Rhodians and fifteen Knights were found dead, and more than five hundred were wounded. This was a marvelous feat of arms and valor, and those that saw it knew a powerful deed was done this day. The defenders knew that the ont sceu ceulx de Rhodes les turcs furent bien esmerveilles[587] de la resistance[588] quilz trouverent, et cuidoient fermement et de fait avoir la ville et ny avoit celluy lequel ne portast une ou deux cordes saintes[589] ou en leurs sains[590] pour lier[591] ceulx de la ville a la venue quilz les prendroient[592] maiz comme dieu le voulut ilz en furent gardes.[593]

Non obstant toutes lesquelles vaillances et prousses[594] que firent ceulx de la ville neussent peu estre maistres de recouvrer leur muraille ne rebouter les turcs qui lavoient[595] gaigne[596] et qui estoient dessus en grant nombre et qui tousiours y montoyent en grant puissance se neust este la grace de nostre seigneur qui eust[597] pitie[598] deulx et de la ville, car ung grant miracle y fut monstre. quant monseigneur le maistre eust fait desploier[599] la bandiere du cruxefiz, les turcs virent en[600] lair sur ladicte bandiere une grant croix de couleur dor et si daultre part virent sur ladicte muraille se leur fat advis une belle pucelle vestue de blanc qui tenoit en lune de ses mains une lance et en lautre main ung escu blanc au pres[601] virent ung homme moult pourement vestu lequel estoit acompaigne de beaucoup de[602] belles gens lesquelles choses leur firent si grant paour et frayeur quilz ne savoient que faire et navoient povoir du monde de eulx deffendre si non de fouyr[603] et reculler.[604] et ceulx de la ville ne virent riens de tout cecy mais virent bien trois jours apres que les turcs eurent mis le siege devant la ville une estoille qui sapparut en lair moult grande et merveilleusement figuree en maniere dune croix et la perdirent de veue trois jours devant que les Turcs se partissent de devant ladicte ville pour lesquelles choses il fault bien dire et croire que la victoire vint de la grace de

dieu et quil combatit pour la ville et deftendit tous ceulx de dedans, pour laquelle victoire Turks were well amazed at the resistance that they found, and they had firmly believed they would take the city. There was not one of them who did not carry one or two girded cords in order to bind the Rhodians when they captured them; but as God willed it, they were saved.

Even though the Rhodians possessed courage and prowess, it could only be by the grace of our Lord who had pitied the people of Rhodes that they recovered their wall and rebuffed the powerful Turks who had taken it and were holding it in large numbers. Because one great miracle was demonstrated there; when my Lord Master had unfurled the banner of the crucifixion, the Turks saw in the air above the banner a great cross of gold, and to one side above the wall was revealed to them a beautiful virgin clothed in white who held a lance in one hand and a white shield in the other. She was attended by a man very poorly dressed, who was accompanied by many beautiful people. These things made them so fearful and afraid that they did not know what to do, and they lacked the power to defend themselves, if not to dig in or to retreat. The townspeople did not see anything at all of this, but they well recalled that three days after the Turks had laid siege to the city, a star that appeared in the air very large and marvelously took the shape of a cross. It disappeared from view three days before the Turks lifted the siege. For these reasons, it seemed good to say and to believe that the victory came from the grace of God, and that He fought for the city and all in it. monseigneur le maistre et tous les nobles chevaliers et vaillans gens de la ville tant hommes que femmes et enfans rendirent graces a dieu a nostre dame et a monseigneur saint Jehan Batipste et rendent encores[605] chacun jour de la grant grace quil leur avoit fait de les avoir ainsi saulvez et delivres[606] de la main des faulx chiens turcs ennemis de la foy catholique que dieu par sa grace les vueille[607] tous destruire et confondre, Amen.

Quinse jours apres arriverent en Rhodes deux grosses naves que le roy ferrand roy de naples y envoyoit pour le secours dicelle lesquelles estoient chargees de toutes vitailles et refreschissemen,[608] et pourtoient mille[609] hommes de secours quant les turcs les virent venir afeusterent sur le bort de lentree du port aucunes bombardes pour domager[610] et faire perir les naves et quant furent approuches dudit port et que la premiere cuida entrer dedans tirerent leurs bombardes en telle maniere quilz rompirent larbre et les voilles[611] ploierent et cheurent bas et fut la nave sans voille et une aultre bombarde frappa a travers de la pouppe et tua deux hommes et rompit ung coffre qui y estoit ou estoient les ornemens deglise de quoy le patron faisoit chanter messe et rua tout en mer si non les osties achanter qui estoient au coffre dans une boete et demourerent sans boete[612] toutes entieres en la nave sans nulle corruption[613] dont le patron et ceulx de la nave furent fort esmerveilles veu

que tout le surplus du coffre avoit este rue en mer et peri[614] et le chappellain[615] de la nave les garde par grant especi aulte[616] et la nuyt la nave fut tiree dedans le port et lautre nave qui venoit apres qui vit sa conserve ainsi mal empoint de larbre et aussi quil ny avoit pas bon vent pour entrer au port cuida surgir pres la tour saint nicolas mais quant elle vit[617] la fureur des bombardes print[618] la voulte de mer ou elle voltoia lespasse[619] de trois jours pendant lequel temps les galeres et fustes du siege la vindrent assaillir, lesquelz se deffendirent vaillemment tant que les turcs ne leur peurent faire My Lord Master and all the noble Knights and valiant people of the city, men, women, and children, gave thanks to God, to our Lady, and to St. John the Baptist for the victory. Every day they returned thanks for the great grace that had saved them in this manner and delivered them from the hands of the Turks, false dogs, and enemies of the Catholic faith, that God by His grace had destroyed and confused. Amen.

Fifteen days later, two large ships arrived in Rhodes sent by King Ferrand of Naples to aid them. They had been packed full of supplies, food, and one thousand men. When the Turks saw them come, they positioned some bombards on the shore of the entry to the harbor to damage and sink the ships. When the ships were approaching the harbor, and the first was about to enter, the Turks fired their bombards in such a way that they broke the mast and the sails, struck the ship and damaged it below. The ship was without sails. The other bombard struck the poop, and killed two men. It broke a box that contained church ornaments with which the owner used to say Mass, and flung it all into the sea. But not the host, which was out of the box in a trunk, and all the trunks were stored in the hold of the ship and were not damaged. The sailors were amazed, for they thought it had perished in the sea with everything in the box. The Chaplain of the ship guarded it with great care.[15] That night, the ship was towed into port, and the second ship saw it saved in this manner, with a badly damaged mast. It did not have a good wind to enter the harbor around the tower of St. Nicholas. But when its captain saw the fury of the bombards, he went out to sea for three days, during which time the galleys and the fustes of the siege assailed him.[16] He defended himself so valiantly that the Turks feared doing anything nul mal et[620] y fut tue beaucoup de[621] turcs des galeres et fustes[622] et lung des principaulx capitaines du siege y fut naure et blecie et emporte comme mort et ny eust personne tue en la nave mais aucuns furent blecies et peu et au bout de trois jours[623] entrerent dedans le port dont ceulx de la ville furent bien joyeux et recomfortes[624] des vivres et refreschissemens et gens[625] quilz apporterent et furent[626] les tres bien venus et reccuz[627] de ceulx de la ville.

En la fin quant le Bachal vit quil ne pouoit riens faire de son prouffit[628] et quil nestoit pas asses puissant pour avoir la ville et quil ne pouoit[629] garder

denter et saillir du port qui[65]" ny entrast secours et quil labouroit en vain et aussi que liver approuchoit[631] et quil neust peu[632] tenir ses navieres au tour dudit Rhodes durant liver ou aultre chose a ce le movant®[3] se delibera de sen retourner en turquie[634] et en son pais pourquoy le jour de la nostre dame de myaoust[635] feist repasser sur lesdictes navieres jusques au fisto grant partie des turcs dudit siege avec leurs chevaulx et aultres choses et de la sen retournerent lesdictes navieres lever et charger tout le demourant et tout le surplus[636] des turcs et lartillerie et les aultres choses a eulx necessaries et sen alerent du tout en leur pais et devez favoir[637] que en leur recueillant ne faisoient pas les grans cheres[638] ne sonnoient leurs trompetes[63?] ne tabours et ne faisoyent pas le grant bruit quilz faisoient quant ilz mirent le siege mais reculerent le plus coyement quilz peurent[640] de paour quilz avoyent de ceulx de la ville et ainsi sen retournerent les turcs a grant deshonneur. bad to him, and he killed many Turks on the galleys and fustes, including one of the principal Captains of the siege, who was injured and carried off as dead. No one was killed in the ship, but some were wounded. After three days it entered into the port. The Rhodians were joyful and offloaded the supplies and people it carried, and they were well received.

In the end, the Pasha saw that nothing he did would profit him. He did not have the power to take the town; he was unable to keep and block aid from entering the port; he labored in vain, and as winter approached, he could not keep his ships around Rhodes during that season, or something else would remove them. He decided to return to Turkey and his lands. Therefore, on the day of our Lady of Myaoust, he sent a great party of Turks on the ships to Physkos with all their equipment and other things. The ships returned to collect and carry all that remained; all the surplus of the Turks, the artillery, and the other things necessary to them. They all returned to their lands. Lacking favor because of their withdrawal, they did not have a great welcome, nor did they sound their trumpets, nor taborins. They did not make the great noise that they made during the siege, but they remembered, in the great silence, that they had feared, as well as the misery that the Rhodians bestowed on them. In this manner, the Turks returned in great dishonor. Si prions a dieu devotement que en tel lieu puissent aler quilz puissent devenir bons christiens et soustenir la foy catholique ou aultrement dieu par sa grace les vucille[641] du tout destruire, que jamais ne puissent nuire[642] aux bons christiens, amen.

Explicit[643]

If good Christians worship God devotedly in such a situation and sustain the Catholic faith, God by his grace will protect them from destruction. No harm will come to good Christians.

End.

1 Sarnowsky, *Macht und Herrschaft,* p. 678, identifies two different Ademar du Puys who eventually became priors of Auvergne, in 1457–1464 and 1519–1521.

2 The *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue* records three copies in the world. The Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris has copies of both the Lyons and the Audenarde editions. The National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg has a copy of the Lyons edition. Heinrich Kurz and Placid Weissenbach, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Literatur, vorzüglich aus den Archiven und Bibliotheken des Kantons Aargau* (Aargau, 1846), pp. 430–432, discovered a copy of the Lyons edition in the cantonal library of Aargau. There is no record of this volume in the modern online catalogue of the Aargauer Kantonsbibliothek.

3 René d'Aubert de Vertôt, *Histoire des Chevaliers hospitaliers de S.Jean de Jérusalem,* 4 vols. (Paris, 1726), 2:598–616. Jean-Bernard de Vaivre and Laurent Vissière recently published a modern edition in *Tous les deables d'enfer: relations du siège de Rhodes par les Ottomans en 1480* (Genève: Libraire Droz, S.A., 2014), pp. 502–525, which appeared just as this book was going to press.

1 Lyons: Two-line hand-drawn initial "E." Audenarde: Five-line printed initial "E."

2 Audenarde: mil.

3 Lyons: ennemy.

4 Audenarde: laquele.

5 Audenarde: vell.

6 Audenarde: escripre.

7 Audenarde: pluspres.

8 Audenarde: lay.

9 Audenarde: racompter.

9 Lyon: parcillement. Audenarde: pareilement.

10 Audenarde: tesmoignier.

12 Audenarde: qui ont este.

13 Audenarde: presens et cest escript visite tant chevaliers quam que aultres gens de la ville.

14 Audenarde: na pas science ne intelligence pour comprendre descripre une si grande victoire que dieu ha donne.

15 Audenarde: playsir de loyr.

16 Lyons: Two-line hand-drawn initial "E." Audenarde: Five-line decorated initial "E."

17 Audenarde: habondante des biens.

18 Audenarde: ville de rodes une tresbonne cite.

19 Audenarde: desplus grands.

20 Audenarde: a lopposite.

21 Audenarde: ennviron vi.

22 Audenarde: tourree.

23 Audenarde: ha la.

24 Audenarde: des.

25 Audenarde: tous.

26 Audenarde: vris.

27 Audenarde: de petite.

28 Audenarde: beaucop des nobles.

29 Audenarde: ha.

30 Audenarde: quatre.

31 Audenarde: "telles" omitted.

32 Audenarde: qui.

33 Audenarde: illec.

34 Audenarde: des.

35 Audenarde: a.

36 Audenarde: des.

37 Lyons: dilecques.

38 Audenarde: ordonne establi.

39 Audenarde: aultres.

40 Audenarde: meismement.

41 Audenarde: meismes.

42 Audenarde: premier se trouvoit.

43 Audenarde: pouroit.

44 Audenarde: fust mis.

45 Lyons: boulsissent. Oudennarde: bolsissent.

46 Audenarde: blances.

47 Audenarde: arougamment.

48 Lyons: assin.

49 Audenarde: hors.

50 Audenarde: sourprins.

51 Audenarde: deffendoit.

52 Audenarde: a terre.

53 Audenarde: assez.

54 Audenarde: despit tous les turcs.

1 This episode appears in all the accounts, but Dupuis provides the most information about this Knight and the circumstances of his death. Curte recorded the same first name (Peter) but identified him as a Portuguese Knight.

55 Audenarde: le.

56 Audenarde: grosses.

57 Audenarde: du.

58 Audenarde: de une.

59 Audenarde: cent.

60 Audenarde: cincquante.

61 Audenarde: fist.

62 Audenarde: icelluy.

63 Audenarde: vallee.

64 Audenarde: leurs.

65 Possibly "taudis."

66 Audenarde: afeustez.

67 Audenarde: salva.

2 Here, the term "auberge" refers to the building, or inn, which was the residence of the knights of Auvergne in Rhodes.

3 A "taudis" is a moveable covering that protected the engineers during the siege.

68 Audenarde: pour.

69 Audenarde: aussi pour lutilite (omitting "pour le bien et").

70 Audenarde: repentoit.

71 Audenarde: dist.

72 Audenarde: luy fu.

73 Audenarde: prudentement.

74 Audenarde: comme.

75 Audenarde: conduict.

76 Audenarde: introduict.

77 Audenarde: metal.

78 Audenarde: unse.

79 Audenarde: si.

80 Audenarde: des aultres.

81 Audenarde: courouchies.

82 Audenarde: quil.

4 Compare this with Caoursin's version of Master George s interrogation, in which the Turks had one hundred thousand men and fewer artillery pieces.

83 Audenarde: Le derrenier iour du mois.

84 Audenarde: estaiges.

85 Audenarde: mengoyent.

86 Audenarde: assez a faire.

87 Audenarde: boicte.

88 Audenarde: encoires.

89 Audenarde: merchy.

90 Audenarde: a plain.

91 Audenarde: sil pooit [sic],

92 Audenarde: facillement.

93 Audenarde: Pourquoy.

94 Audenarde: ladicte.

95 Audenarde: mainere.

96 Audenarde: des.

97 Audenarde: ceutes.

5 A courtau, also spelled courtaud and curtow, was a short-barreled gun with a large bore, similar to a mortar. It first appeared in French manuscript sources ca. 1460. See Bert S. Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe* (Baltimore, 1997), p. 128; Philippe Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1984), p. 142.

98 Audenarde: sinon.

99 Audenarde: ruez.

100 Audenarde: destruicte.

101 Audenarde: lesquelz.

102 Audenarde: au tour.

103 Audenarde: tonneaulx.

104 Audenarde: vaisseaulx.

105 Audenarde: colentines.

106 Audenarde: lesquelx.

107 Audenarde: avez.

108 Audenarde: iour du mois de iuing.

109 Audenarde: des.

110 Audenarde: encriant.

111 Audenarde: espoentables [sic].

112 Audenarde: ensamble,

113 Audenarde: entirant.

114 Audenarde: approcherent.

115 Audenarde: facon.

116 Audenarde: espouentable les oyr approcher.

117 Audenarde: approches.

118 Audenarde: artillez.

119 Audenarde: afeustez.

120 Audenarde: traict.

121 Audenarde: retotourner.

122 Audenarde: demouorast.

123 Audenarde: noyez.

124Audenarde: acompaigne.

125Audenarde: loenges.

126Audenarde: ladicte ville de rhodes.

127Audenarde: ses.

128Audenarde: desplaysant.

129 Audenarde: samblablement.

130 Audenarde: iarden de playsance.

131 Audenarde: egratignier.

132 Audenarde: demouroit.

133 Audenarde: batre.

134 Audenarde: feist.

135 Audenarde: ladite.

136 Audenarde: pluspart.

137 Audenarde: defendue.

138 Audenarde: porter huyt.

139 Audenarde: assegier.

140 Audenarde: apres.

141 Audenarde: vny.

142 Audenarde: Sy.

143 Audenarde: encontre.

144 Audenarde: lieux.

145 Audenarde: dommaigerent.

146 Audenarde: au droit.

147 Audenarde: pies despessear.

6 Paris, BN Lat 6067, f. 55v, shows the placement of the Turkish artillery on a spit of land creating a cove flanking the Mole of the Windmills. A gallows stands at the tip of the promentary. The bird's-eye overview of the siege on f. 30v shows better perspective of the size of the cove, which curved around the walls of the Post of Italy. Today, a modern mole obscures most of the site.

148 Audenarde: asprement.

149 Audenarde: quil.

150 Audenarde: fut esmerville.

151 Audenarde: si a en.

152 Audenarde: frere.

153 Audenarde: a.

154 Audenarde: "qui est une petite ville et ung fort chasteau" missing.

155 Audenarde: rodes.

156 Audenarde: aultre.

157 Audenarde: C.

158 Audenarde: ouoyent.

159 Audenarde: desdites.

160 Audenarde: Touteffois.

161 Audenarde: tonneaux.

162 Audenarde: fagots.

163 Audenarde: soulfre.

164 Audenarde: bailleroyent.

165 Audenarde: besoignoyent.

166 Audenarde: fortifioyent.

167 Audenarde: quel.

168 Audenarde: quil.

169 Audenarde: playsir.

7 Caoursin only mentions that Castle Rubeo (the Red Castle) heard the noise, not Kos.

170 Audenarde: traveilloit.

171 Audenarde: fortifioit.

172 Audenarde: tonneaux.

173 Audenarde: faysoit.

174 Audenarde: tuoyent.

175 Audenarde: lesdicts.

176 Audenarde: affuster.

177 Audenarde: a lentour.

178 Audenarde: lesdicts.

179 Audenarde: pouez.

180 Lyons: choit.

181 Audenarde: tramblast.

182 Audenarde: pou.

183 Audenarde: tuez.

184 Audenarde: tuez desdicts.

185 Audenarde: lesdits.

Audenarde: cheoyent.

Audenarde: gaires.

Audenarde: sinon.

Audenarde: tuoyent.

Audenarde: foyson.

Audenarde: lesquelles.

Audenarde: confessez.

Audenarde: repentans.

Audenarde: pechies.

Audenarde: ordonnez.

Audenarde: volsist.

Audenarde: persecutoyent.

Audenarde: honnourable.

Audenarde: prieres.

Audenarde: reniez.

Audenarde: ayder.

Audenarde: trahison.

Audenarde: lee.

Audenarde: dilgamment.

Audenarde: lez.

Audenarde: renyez.

Audenarde: en.

Audenarde: langaige.

Audenarde: nicontinent.

Audenarde: gehine.

Audenarde: avoitapporte.

Audenarde: poysons.

Audenarde: dempoysonner.

Audenarde: le.

Audenarde: empoysonner.

Audenarde: morir.

Audenarde: trop.

Audenarde: racompter.

Audenarde: effect.

Audenarde: fit.

Audenarde: Iyer.

222 Audenarde: ha.

223 Audenarde: batoyent.

224 Audenarde: tourcs.

225 Audenarde: approuches.

226 Audenarde: pour venir.

227 Lyons: gettoyent.

228 Audenarde: force.

229 Audenarde: des.

230 Audenarde: esdits.

231 Audenarde: qui estoyent.

232 Audenarde: diz.

8 The full-page illumination of Paris BN Lat 6067, f. 50v, shows the Turks preparing a trench parallel to the moat, separated by earthworks.

233 Audenarde: lesdits.

234 Lyons: repairez.

235 Audenarde: desquelz.

236 Audenarde: apporterent.

237 Audenarde: testes.

238 Audenarde: bout.

239 Audenarde: lances.

240 Audenarde: mirentlefeu.

241 Audenarde: enbesoignez.

242 Audenarde: occupez.

243 Audenarde: saire.

244 Audenarde: boictes.

245 Audenarde: vaisseaulx.

246 Audenarde: religiez.

247 Audenarde: galefetez.

248 Audenarde: lyez.

249 Audenarde: claver.

250 Audenarde: sil.

251 Audenarde: quil.

252 Audenarde: de puis.

253 Audenarde: comme.

254 Both imprints contain the word "encre" (ink); however, "ancre" (anchor) makes more sense in context.

Audenarde: bouc.

Audenarde: appercheut.

Audenarde: plonga.

Audenarde: deleave.

Audenarde: coppee.

Audenarde: du mauvais turc.

Audenarde: natelyes.

Audenarde: merlebay.

Audenarde: lesquelx.

Audenarde: tuez.

Audenarde: en.

Audenarde: bouts.

Audenarde: de mer.

Audenarde: espoentables.

Audenarde: des.

Audenarde: espoenter.

Audenarde: esbahyr.

Audenarde: coraige.

Audenarde: armez.

Audenarde: afeustez.

Audenarde: preparez.

276 Audenarde: recheurent.

277 Audenarde: lesdicts.

278 Audenarde: des.

279 Audenarde: traicts.

280 Audenarde: tuez.

281 Audenarde: enpieches.

282 Audenarde: brulez.

283 Audenarde: afeustez.

284 Audenarde: bombardes fut.

285 Audenarde: tuez.

286 Audenarde: dessuz.

287 Audenarde: principaulx.

288 Audenarde: des.

289 Audenarde: des.

290 Audenarde: lesquelz.

291 Audenarde: dessuz.

292 Audenarde: noyez.

293 Audenarde: nommez.

294 Audenarde: franchois.

295 Audenarde: approchoyent.

296 Audenarde: chaincture.

297 Audenarde: tyroit.

298 Audenarde: leur.

299 Audenarde: hachoit.

300 Audenarde: fu.

301 Lyons: quil il fist anisi. Audenarde: quil faisoit ainsi. 302 Audenarde: blechye.

303 Audenarde: penser quand.

304 denarde: gary.

305 Audenarde: lesdicts.

306 Audenarde: reboutez.

307 Audenarde: fois.

308 Audenarde: tuez.

309 Audenarde: cincq.

310 Audenarde: cents.

311 Audenarde: principaulx.

312 Audenarde: pareillemet.

313 Audenarde: lesquelz.

314 Audenarde: naurez.

315 Audenarde: blechies.

316 Audenarde: Aprez.

317 Audenarde: loenge.

318 Audenarde: et nostre.

319 Audenarde: alencontre.

320 Audenarde: rechief.

321 Audenarde: reboutez.

322 Audenarde: melancolie.

9 Dupuy is the only narrative source for the fighting friar, but AOM 388, f. 204r, a safe conduct dated 13 July 1481 for Fra Dominic of the "ordinis predicatorem" (the Dominicans) praised him for his actions against the ships of the Turks during the siege.

323 Audenarde: de feste de monseigneur.

324 Audenarde: vingt et troisieme iour du mois.

325 Audenarde: iuing.

326 Audenarde: loenge.

327 Audenarde: solempnite.

328 Audenarde: coustume.

329 Audenarde: faire des grands.

330 Audenarde: feuz.

331 Audenarde: brans.

332 Audenarde: des.

333 Audenarde: lieux.

334 Audenarde: approcherent.

335 Audenarde: affuste.

336 Lyons: coupt.

337 Audenarde: solempnite.

338 Audenarde: lesquelx.

339 Audenarde: artilerie.

340 Lyons: coupt.

341 Audenarde: environ.

342 Audenarde: sestoyent.

343 Audenarde: approchez.

344 Audenarde: perdue.

345 Audenarde: approuches.

346 Audenarde: daultres.

10 Curte also mentions this event, although Caoursin does not.

347 Audenarde: approuches.

348 Audenarde: gecte.

349 Audenarde: per.

350 Audenarde: sounent.

351 Audenarde: telement.

352 Audenarde: approuches.

353 Audenarde: demouroit ung.

354 Audenarde: lesdits.

355 Audenarde: vuyder.

356 Audenarde: pierres.

357 Audenarde: approuches.

358 Lyons: fon.

359 Audenarde: puissance.

360 Audenarde: naresteroit.

361 Audenarde: beu.

362 Audenarde: trenchees.

363 Audenarde: semplissoyent.

364 Audenarde: des.

365 Audenarde: apparence.

366 Audenarde: vaulsist.

367 Audenarde: souspeconne.

368 Lyons: tousionts.

369 Audenarde: fleiches.

370 Audenarde: ou.

371 Audenarde: gardez.

372 Audenarde: effect.

373 Audenarde: des.

374 Audenarde: trayson.

375 Audenarde: des.

376 Audenarde: des.

377 Audenarde: citez.

378 Audenarde: racompter.

379 Audenarde: parloyent.

380 Audenarde: cose.

381 Audenarde: esbahyr.

382 Audenarde: vrais.

383 Audenarde: oy.

384 Audenarde: intencion.

385 Audenarde: silz.

386 Audenarde: lesquelz.

387 Audenarde: port.

388 Audenarde: aller.

389 Audenarde: fut.

390 Audenarde: alle.

391 Audenarde: espier.

392 Audenarde: angoissement.

393 Audenarde: quilz.

394 Audenarde: samblablement.

395 Audenarde: lesquelz.

396 Audenarde: mecteroyent.

397 Audenarde: lectres.

398 Audenarde: envoya.

399 Audenarde: aultrefois.

400 Audenarde: alle.

401 Audenarde: lavoit.

402 Audenarde: saulfconduit.

403 Audenarde: ensamble.

404 Audenarde: et la.

405 Audenarde: luy.

11 Dupuis is the only source for this story.

12 AOM 387, ff. 53v-55v, 62v, d'Aubusson gave Fra Anthony Gaultier, castellan of Rhodes, two vacant commanderies for his role in the siege, 18 August 1480.

406 Audenarde: samblables.

407 Audenarde: substance.

408 Audenarde: samble.

409 Audenarde: fut.

410 Audenarde: monseigneur.

411 Audenarde: voulez.

412 Audenarde: traicterons.

413 Audenarde: meilleur.

414 Audenarde: monseigneur.

415 Audenarde: osez.

416 Audenarde: ha.

417 Audenarde: des.

418 Audenarde: des.

419 Lyons: beaulx.

420 Lyons: vii.

421 Audenarde: pite.

422 Audenarde: laissez.

423 Audenarde: prend.

424 Audenarde: chastelain.

425 Audenarde: respondre dist et.

426 Audenarde: telle.

427 Audenarde: sachts.

428 Audenarde: vostre.

429 Audenarde: avez.

430 Audenarde: et.

13 This exchange is similar to the one in Caoursin, but omits the Turkish rhetoric. Dupuis repeats the Castellan's answer almost verbatim.

431 Audenarde: vostre.

432 Audenarde: comme.

433 Audenarde: exortez.

434 Audenarde: menassez.

435 Audenarde: esprouuer.

436 Audenarde: noz.

437 Audenarde: coraiges.

438 Audenarde: volentez.

439 Audenarde: avez diet.

440 Audenarde: avez.

441 Audenarde: Ihesucrist.

442 Audenarde: qui est qui est (sic).

443 Audenarde: nous sommes.

444 Audenarde: pres.

445 Audenarde: appareilliez.

446 Audenarde: morir.

447 Audenarde: plustost.

448 Audenarde: coinoings.

449 Audenarde: faulse.

450 Audenarde: tenez.

451 Audenarde: iuste.

452 Audenarde: povoir.

453 Audenarde: quavez.

454 Lyons: Crist. Ihesucrist.

455 Audenarde: cognoistrez.

456 Audenarde: a faire.

457 Audenarde: azyens.

458 Audenarde: hardy.

459 Audenarde: ayme.

460 Audenarde: viengne.

461 Audenarde: ambassadeurs.

462 Audenarde: courouche.

463 Audenarde: iura.

464 Audenarde: sou.

465 Audenarde: palx.

466 Audenarde: approuches.

467 Audenarde: environ .ii.

468 Lyons: yeust.

469 Audenarde: prochaines.

470 Audenarde: de .viii.

471 Audenarde: emply.

472 Audenarde: et le.

473 Audenarde: fust.

474 Audenarde: ieudy.

475 Audenarde: iullet.

476 Audenarde: Cent.

477 Audenarde: deslogier.

478 Audenarde: dessuz.

479 Audenarde: pour.

480 Audenarde: sapprochoyent.

481 Audenarde: approuches.

482 Audenarde: en grand.

483 Audenarde: pooyent.

484 Audenarde: uns.

485 Audenarde: ceux.

486 Audenarde: approcher.

487 Audenarde: plusgrand.

488 Audenarde: traveil.

489 Audenarde: acoustume.

490 Audenarde: cent.

491 Audenarde: le.

492 Audenarde: dheure.

493 Audenarde: en.

494 Audenarde: environ.

495 Audenarde: cincq.

496 Audenarde: sourprins.

497 Audenarde: qui.

498 Audenarde: orez.

499 Audenarde: gaigine.

500 Audenarde: trouver.

501 Audenarde: resistence mirent.

502 Audenarde: estandart.

503 Audenarde: ia.

504 Audenarde: gaigniet et.

505 Audenarde: estandars.

506 Lyons: en si = a.

507 Audenarde: toutefois.

508 Audenarde: trompette.

509 Audenarde: eussies.

510 Audenarde: gardoyent.

511 Audenarde: degrez.

512 Audenarde: a mont.

513 Audenarde: des.

514 Audenarde: montoyent.

515 Audenarde: a mont.

516 Audenarde: pooyent (sic).

517 Audenarde: lesdicts.

518 Audenarde: ladicte.

519 Audenarde: as.

Audenarde: tomba.

Audenarde: dessuz.

Audenarde: tuez.

Audenarde: des.

Audenarde: des.

Audenarde: mauuais.

Audenarde: des.

Audenarde: fois.

Audenarde: montez.

Audenarde: combatoyent.

Audenarde: desployer.

Audenarde: laquelle,

Audenarde: crucifiz.

Audenarde: estendu.

Audenarde: veissent.

Audenarde: goutte.

Audenarde: saillir.

Audenarde: samblant.

Audenarde: meismes.

Audenarde: trouvoyent.

Audenarde: dessuz.

Audenarde: y eust.

Audenarde: des.

Audenarde: estandart.

Audenarde: gaignie.

Audenarde: soye.

Audenarde: estandars.

Audenarde: retonrnant.

Audenarde: loisir.

Audenarde: chassez.

Audenarde: lestandart.

Audenarde: fu.

Audenarde: lesdis.

Audenarde: se.

Audenarde: gaires.

Audenarde: enseignes.

556 Audenarde: samble.

557 Audenarde: onques.

558 Audenarde: brebis.

559 Audenarde: demourez.

560 Audenarde: encoires.

561 Audenarde: vifz.

562 Audenarde: "nestoyent que naures et qui" omitted.

563 Audenarde: aultres.

14 The Prior of France held the office of Hospitaller on the Council of the Order.

564 Lyons: beaulx.

565 Audenarde: peut bonnement regarder.

566 Audenarde: par.

567 Audenarde: environ.

568 Audenarde: cincq.

569 Audenarde: naurez.

570 Audenarde: morurent.

571 Audenarde: mourt.

572 Audenarde: ou.

573 Audenarde: trois.

574 Audenarde: platus.

575 Audenarde: des.

576 Audenarde: samble.

577 Audenarde: brulez.

578 Audenarde: apporte.

579 Audenarde: huyt.

580 Audenarde: "rendre" omitted.

581 Audenarde: maudisoyent.

582 Audenarde: environ.

583 Audenarde: quarante.

584 Audenarde: xv.

585 Audenarde: cincq.

586 Audenarde: faict.

587 Audenarde: esmervilliez.

588 Audenarde: resistence.

589 Audenarde: chainctes.

590 Audenarde: chaings.

591 Audenarde: lyer.

592 Audenarde: prenroyent.

593 Audenarde: gardez.

594 Audenarde: proessrs (sic).

595 Audenarde: quilz avoyent.

596 Audenarde: gaigniee.

597 Audenarde: eult.

598 Audenarde: pite.

599 Audenarde: desployer.

600 Audenarde: eu.

601 Lyons: aupres = apres.

602 Audenarde: des.

603 Audenarde: fuyr.

604 Audenarde: reculer.

605 Audenarde: encoires.

606 Audenarde: delvirez.

607 Audenarde: veulle.

608 Audenarde: refreschissemens.

609 Audenarde: portoyent mil.

610 Audenarde: domaiger.

611 Audenarde: voelles.

612 Audenarde: boicte et demourerent sans boicte.

613 Audenarde: corrupcion.

614 Audenarde: pery.

615 Audenarde: chapelain.

616 Audenarde: especiaulte.

617 Audenarde: "vit…vit" printed "vek…veit."

618 Audenarde: prind.

619 Audenarde: voultoya lespace.

15 Dupuis is our only source for this story.

16 Caoursin says the naval battle took three hours, not days.

620 Audenarde: ce.

621 Audenarde: des.

622 Audenarde: "et fustes" omitted.

623 Audenarde: "blecies et enfin entrerent;" "peu et au bout de trois jours" omitted.

624 Audenarde: recomfortez.

625 Audenarde: "etles gens."

626 Audenarde: "apporterent furent."

627 Audenarde: receus.

628 Audenarde: proffit.

629 Audenarde: pooit.

630 Audenarde: quil.

631 Audenarde: approchoit.

632 Audenarde: peut.

633 Audenarde: mouuant.

634 Audenarde: turcquie.

635 Audenarde: demiaoust.

636 Audenarde: sourplus.

637 Audenarde: scavoir.

638 Audenarde: chieres.

639 Audenarde: trompettes.

640 Audenarde: polrent.

641 Audenarde: veueille.

642 Audenarde: nuyre.

643 Audenarde: Cy fine la siege de rhodes Impressee a Audenarde. On the verso side: D vray dieu quy envoy astes a tes disciples ton sainct esperit et ceulx de rhodes deliurastes des turcs felons Ian preterit enlumine les coers que cest escript liront et donne vraye cognoissance de laissier pechies en vain iolyt et de paradis la ioyssance.

# Chapter 8
# Jacobo Curte, *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata*

Jacobo Curte, also known as Iacobus Corti (ca. 1449–1501 [?]), was an Augustinian friar who wrote an eyewitness description of the siege of Rhodes.[1] He had been born to a noble family in Pavia and entered the Augustinian Order circa 1475–1477. He went to the Augustinian convent on Rhodes sometime between 1477 and 1480. His description of the siege, entitled *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata,* was printed by Erhard Ratdolt of Venice sometime after 18 August 1480. Curte dedicated the volume, his only published work, to his relative Giovanni Francisco de Curte or Corti, who taught civil law at the University of Padua until 1464, when he obtained the chair in canon law.[2] After the siege, Jacobo served as prior of his convent in Rhodes from 1482 until his return to Padua in 1486. There, he entered the university, where he became Master of Theology. He remained at Padua until 1501. There are no further records of him after that year.

Erhard Ratdolt printed Curte's book in 1480, possibly at the same time as Caoursin's *Descriptio,* but unlike the *Descriptio* it was not subsequently reprinted, translated, or copied into manuscripts. *De urbis Rhodiae* presents a version of the siege not influenced by Caoursin or any other Hospitaller source of information. Unlike Caoursin, Curte made no claim to writing history and presented his work as a printed oration. Curte's interpretation differs significantly from Caoursin's, particularly in assessing the role of the Order of the Hospital. Unlike Caoursin's brave, prudent Knights, Curte's Knights were not well prepared and made significant blunders. Defeat remained a distinct possibility, and the defenders discussed the reality of having to surrender. Curte's hero is Anthony d'Aubusson, who rallied the people and raised their morale, not his brother the master. The most notable difference between Curte and Caoursin is the role of divine intervention in the outcome of the siege. According to Caoursin, God aided the people of Rhodes against the Turks because of Pierre d'Aubusson's Christian chivalry and careful planning, supported by the courage of the Knights and people of Rhodes, In comparison, Curte attributed the victory to the aid of God, the Virgin, and John the Baptist. Divine intervention, responding to the prayers of the people, turned the tide of battle in favor of the Christians. According to Curte, the only thing that saved the city was the timely arrival of outside aid, not any exertions of its

defenders. Curte's account of the siege is significant because, unlike Caoursin, he was not a member of the Master's household. Through him we have a better idea of what the average Rhodian knew about the siege as it happened. The narrative, of course, reflects Curte's perspective and the interests of his patron. Therefore, Fra Merlo de Piosascho, Admiral of the Order and Prior of the Langue of Italy, is mentioned twice by name, in comparison with other bailiffs who are mentioned only by office.

Curte's original text has not been reprinted since 1480.[3] Emanuele Mizzi published an Italian translation in 1934, which has proved helpful in unraveling Curte's prose.[4] This transcription is based on the copy held by the Library of Congress. Curte's original Latin is retained in the transcription; spelling corrections and expanded abbreviations are in square brackets immediately following the original text. Any substitutions are noted, and the original printed text is in the footnote.

# Ad magnificum spectabilemque J.v.d. dominum franciscum de curte.

Adversus urbem collosensem quid actum sit per ymanissimos turcos Anno domini Mcccclxxx° die vero vigesimatertia maii. Nempe orsurus vereor. Spectabilis iuris utriusque doctor cum magis mihi deflore prestet: coram vidisse lamentabile exidum memorum rhodi quam declamatorie depromere que oculis perpiguit conspexisse. Quis namque sese a lacrimis continere: aut siccis oculis urbis huius et poterit casum recensere. Cum insuper artis tuliane in suis sim, tamen fretus tua germanitate ut habeat aliquid in domino iocunditatis quamquam rudi stilo dictarum ordiri incipiam: nugis atque dimissis fari excogitabo que huic ortodoxe civitati contigere. Alma primus gratia paracliti invocata totiusque trinitatis consilio: cuius nutu omnia que fiunt geruntur et constant.

Beatissimo iesu salvatoris vicario in roma Sixto regnante ac fidelissimo Romanorum imperatore Federico: tunc prudentissimo religioso ac princip[e] domino Petro de Aubuson Reverentissimo magistro militum sancti Joannis in eadem civitate preside existente. eodem die dum p[a]ene sol[is] occasum peteret: et quam piures cives ad montana occ[as]ii causa absconderent, cuidam visum fuit se videre classem ingentem, iam res nobis suspecta erat, qui suspiciendo ait. Videor enim videre ymanissimorum teucrorum classem. Ceteri insuper aspicientes aecor garbasis totum repletum usquequaque prospiciunt. distabat equidem ingens collectio galearum per quinquaginta miliaria: tunc

imperitum vulgus cepit voces ad c[a]elum tendere: atque palmas ad superos inanimes extendere: quasi mulieres. Illa etenim nocte insomnes fuimus: turn ex desiderio vixendi que nam erat hec fama, tum ne irruerent in nos insperato.

Cumuiatissime: verum cum hac tempestate vigilantia. Reverentissimus P[etrus] inerat urbi frumenti vini olei casei salsatarum quoque carnium: ceterorumque alimentorum tanta copia quatenus bimato possemus teucrorum obsidionem

# To the Magnificent and Honorable Lord, Francesco de Curte

What did die ferocious Turks do to the city of the Colossus[1] in the year of our Lord, May 23 1480? Truly, I fear to begin. Distinguished doctor of both laws,[2] I would have preferred to have been dishonored myself than to have witnessed the lamentable destruction of the distinguished Rhodes. It is revolting to me to describe in oratorical style what I have seen with my own eyes. Indeed, how can one keep himself from tears? How can one commemorate the downfall of this city with dry eyes? Although I am unused to the art of Tully,[3] nevertheless, trusting in your brotherhood, and also so it might please my Lord, I will begin to relate these events in a rustic style, and then, avoiding trifles, will contrive to say what happened to this most orthodox city. First, the invocation of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the counsel of all the Trinity, by whose command everything is done, ordered, and maintained.

The most blessed vicar of the Savior Jesus, Sixtus, reigned in Rome;[4] also, the most faithful Frederick reigned as emperor of the Romans;[5] and the most prudent and religious prince and lord, Pierre d'Aubusson, exercised authority as the most reverend master of the Knights of St. John in that city. On a certain day, when the sun had nearly set, several of the Rhodians, who had slipped away to the mountains to view the sunset, seemed to catch sight of a huge fleet. Although we all already suspected it, there was one who gave voice to our suspicions, saying, "I seem to see the fleet of the most terrible Turks." Moreover, others realized that ships were everywhere they looked. Indeed, there in the distance was a huge fleet of galleys stretching over fifty miles. Then, like women, the ignorant mob began to shout to high heaven and to raise their hands up to the sky. We went without sleep that night, first from a desire to discover what this rumor actually meant and then so the enemy should not overwhelm us unexpectedly.

In fact, in preparation for this event, the most reverend Pierre brought into

the city such a great supply of grain, wine, oil, cheese, salted meat, and other supplies that we could have endured a Turkish siege for two years. Also evident perferre: virorum ut prefertur preliantium galeasque gestantium et arma circiter quatuor milia clipeati namque et loricati vestibus quoque ferreis circumamicti equites laureati divi Joannis numero quingenti reperti. Turma qua precunte pollebant menia: balistarum quoque ac defensiones tanta varia genera machinarum maiorum et minorum congeries ferme innumerabiles calcis scilicet in fictilibus olim profugandis hostibus recondit. Olei insuper calefacti replete sartagines ignes preparati in vasculis pice infectis et arte cathenis circumligatis. Plures eo ordine excubie impigre die noctuque fiunt balistariis distinctis: spingarderiis adiacentibus: necnon et armigeriis centum equestribus vallantibus indefesse intra menia urbem.

Dienceps littus insule nostre circa horam vigesimam arripientur: protinusque et navibus derivantes climata nostra capiunt: qui antequam castramentarentur experiri urbem incautius conati sunt: quales sues dum silvam circu[me]unt rugitando: sic discurrentes insolita his inexpertaque loca cum banderiolis: plures eodem die a nostris interficiuntur. Genisarus quidam quendam ruralem insequens non veritus est quasi ad menia approprinquare: cui interfectus equus satis magni pretii fuit. Ipse vero cum tribus vulneribus mortiferis a suis asportatur. Altera vero die loca montana accepere et erga templum divi Stephani quod situm in collibus eminentioribus desuper urbem veluti in fortilitio consistere. Et per circum adiacentia loca castramentati sunt.

Egressi die tertia absque consilio R[everentissimi] P[etri] quidam sunt ex nostris armis inexperti ut irritarent teucros inter quos sacramiscendo bellum accenditur et p[a]ene per horam conflixere adinvicem. Juvenis autem quidam inexpertus quamquam miles sancti Joannis fratrum Petrus portugales ut nostros introduceret exivit quern teucri ut propriis oculis aspeximus interfecerunt igens clamositas teucrorum insonatur caputque suum delatum ad ymanissimum eorum principem intelleximus cum iubilo lateribus. dato munere pro virtute: his diebus ferro cingunt nostra menia precipue dirigunt binas eorum machinas adve[rs]us turrim divi Nicolai nuncupatam rentes si per possibile fores hanc possideri dominationem totius urbis imposterum obtinere: et vere sic fuisset semperque prosequentes multitudinem populi a partibus turche in insulam transferre.

Fortissima siquidem hec turris divi Nicolai nuncupata dijudicabatur que distat a civitate pene ultra centum passus a parte aequili[1] vari sita ante ingressum portus in cornu dextro murus etenim eius a parte terre grossus in vigintiquatuor pedes inveniebatur rotunda quidem erat: et est propugnaculum portus: die vero quinta ab ingressu earn lapidibus in girum circu[m]entibus palmos novem eandem vexant: machinamenta sua prius ponentes erga templum divi Anthonii quod sit[u]m erat in suburbis. Quidam eorum

bombarderius nomine were around 4,000 soldiers who carried helmets, arms, shields, and hauberks as armor, as well as 500 Knights of St John, covered with iron plate. This army formed up before our walls, along with a great variety of ballistas and defensive weapons, artillery large and small, and innumerable clay vessels, namely those that are filled with oil to throw at the enemy. These vessels are filled with hot oil heated by fire, covered with pitch and bound by cords at the top. Additional sentries, alert day and night, carrying crossbows and spingards, along with 100 tireless Knights valiantly stood on the walls of the city.

Then at about the twentieth hour, the Turks landed on the shore of our island, and spilling from their ships, immediately captured some of our ground. Before they established a camp, they rashly attempted to attack the city. Like pigs rutting around in the forest, they wandered across territory that was unknown and unfamiliar to them, flying their banners, and our men killed many at this time. A certain Janissary, chasing a peasant, had no fear as he approached the city walls. His horse, an animal of extremely great value, was killed. He, however, was carried off by his men with three deadly wounds. On the next day, they took the mountainous place next to the Church of St. Stephen, which was located on the tallest hill above the city, in order to make it into a fortress. They set up their camp in the territory adjacent to the church.

On the third day, without the advice of the most reverend Pierre, a certain one of our men who was inexperienced in war stirred up the rest by binding them on oath to immediately attack the Turks. The two sides fought with each other for almost an hour. Pedro, a certain inexperienced Portuguese youth, even though a Knight of the brothers of St. John, went out of the city to lead our men back inside.[6] The Turks killed him, as we saw with our own eyes. A great roar went up from the Turks; and we found out that his head had been delivered to their most cruel leader, who rewarded them for their courage. During these days, the Turks surrounded our walls with artillery and aimed two of their guns at the tower of St. Nicholas, with the assumption that if it were at all possible to capture it we could not prevent them from later gaining control of the entire city. And indeed it happened as follows. The Turks continually strove to transfer a great multitude of people from the regions of Turkey to our island.

This tower of St. Nicholas was judged to be the strongest. It stood nearly a hundred paces from the city and was situated to the north facing the mouth of the harbor. It was on the end of a promontory to the right of the wall. From this plot of earth it was found to be twenty-four feet in width, and it was round. It was the fortification for the harbor. On the fifth day from their arrival, the Turks fired on the tower stones nine palms in diameter, after placing their guns near the Church of St. Anthony, which was located in the

suburbs. A certain Georgius ad nos ingreditur qui ut patibulo confessus est in prosequentibus ut perderet civitatem. Ingressurus promiserat ymanissimo principi vir quidem eloquentissimus: maximusque machinarum artifex. Is enim fuit qui ingentiores machinas teucrorum arte confecit cuius consilio teucrorum princeps multa peragebat benignissime a nobis recipitur ins[c]iis de malivola eius voluntate. Is insuper fuit quare multe civitates christianorum perire et anime quam plurime ad sarralium perducte fuere. Turris ut ita loquar vulneratur et destruitur.

Grandiora fortioraque machinamenta umquam pervisa fuere neque tanta et talia bisantium conducta fuere. Opinamur [teucri][2] nobiliores eius machinas adversus domum sanctissimi precursoris transmisisse: Sedecim certe urbem valaturus ingentes bombardas direxit obmissis illis vehentibus saxa marmorum quinque inferius quid cogitas. Si vidisses terram trementem sub pedibus nostris veluti nos experti sumus proculdubio in cavernis habitasses: ponunt etiam reparia eorum machinarum versus partem orientalem ut in columen deducant menia: erga quam reparia pro tuitione meniorum continue ex lignis terra et saxis constructa peragimus. Septem etenim machinarum reparia adversus eandem partem: que dicitur poste Italie seriatim ponunt: iam[3] pluribus ictibus turrim predictam vexarunt adeo ut signa magna destructionis appareant.

Humanissimus et prudentissimus princeps in hoc conflictu semper dijudicatus fuit. duo namque iuvenes in loco publico certarent: qua ex causa ut timor in omnes irrueret. Prudentissimus princeps eos patibulo suspendi terruit. casu eveneratque et ex insperato ut vixeret limina hierosolime civitatis. Reverentissimi in Christo domini P[etro] M[agistri] germanus dominus Anthonius de Aubonson qui preditus erat gratia et expertus in armis virtute: vir ingenti consilio po[l]lens qui capitaneus gentis et populi electus fuit: cuius regimine et consilio tota civitas congaudet. Verum die p[a]en[e]ultima maii: omni ex parte contra teucros bombardas que ingirum erant urbis et turrim proicere fecit. Adeoque eos terruit: pluresque eorum occidit. Unde meniis per iactum lapidis approximare haud auxi sunt. cannoneer named George, who had defected to our side, confessed under torture about attacks to destroy the city.[7] This man of supreme eloquence and great experience in the use of artillery had promised the most cruel prince of the Turks that he would enter the city. He was the person who skillfully built the largest of the Turkish guns and, with his advice, the Turkish prince carried out and completed many of his operations. Ignorant of his malevolent intentions, we most kindly took him in. It was he who caused many cities of Christians to perish and many souls to be driven into the seraglio. The tower I have been discussing was weakened and destroyed.

Never had been seen such large and powerful guns, of such size and excellence, that had been brought from Constantinople. We think that the

Turks moved the best of their guns across from the Church of the Glorious Precursor.[8] Indeed, they aimed sixteen large and powerful bombards at the city and these fired the limestone balls they had brought with them in the worst way that one could imagine.[9] If you could have seen the land shaking under our feet as we did, you surely would have stayed in a cave. They set up redoubts for their artillery on the eastern side so they could fire down on the walls from high ground. To protect the city walls, we immediately constructed a wall of wood, earth, and stone in the direction of their redoubts. Indeed, the Turks built seven redoubts for their artillery in a line opposite the location known as the Post of Italy,[10] although they had already unleashed so many shots against the aforesaid tower that it appeared largely destroyed.

The prince was always considered extremely humane and wise in this conflict. Two youths fought in a public place, because fear seized upon everyone. The most wise prince held fear at bay by threatening to hang these two on a gallows. It happened, by chance and unexpectedly, that Lord Anthony d'Aubusson (brother of the most reverend lord in Christ, Master Pierre), had entered the city of Jerusalem. He, who was endowed with grace, an expert in the use of arms, a man extremely able in giving advice, was elected captain of the armed men and of the people. The entire city rejoiced in his rule and counsel. On the last day of May, he made bombards fire from every part within the ring of the city and tower against the Turks. This so terrified the Turks and killed such a great number of them, that thereafter they hardly dared approach the city walls because of the barrage of stones.

In ultimo maii die teucri incepere civitatem vexare lapidibus mortariorum excussu suo aerem obnubillantium: illico populus terrore vehementi concutitur: et ni fuisset opitulatio divina et miraculosa profecto excubias declinantes: deliri vagantesque viri fortilitia reliquissent. Populus vero decantabat: "O qui mundum ex tempore fecisti deus noster: qui superbos humiliasti: et semper servientibus tibi: in auxilium angelos direxisti iesu christe mundi salvator. Exurge in adiutorium[4] nostri libera nos ab his quia tu deus unus es in substantia pater filius et spiritus sanctus: et trinus in personis: qui cuncta providentia tua gubernas: regis: et dirigis. Age quesumus nobiscum iuxta mansuetudinem tuam: et ne despicias orationes servorum tuorum assidue ad te clamantium: memento bonorum tuorum quibus nos a manu dyaboli liberasti. Oro reminisce miserationum tuarum que a seculo sunt: et non permittas nos ab inimicis tue crucis pessundari. Recordare insuper que in novo testamento deus misericordiarum appellaris: et non ultionum. peccavimus enim ubi et mandatis tuis non obadivimus: et iniquitates nostre multiplicate sunt super arena maris. tamen memento passionis tue atque bonitatis: ne agas nobiscum in orationem sempiternam oramus ne dicant gentes quoniam iesus non est deus eorum.

Laudes divine continui decantores non cessent hoc exemplo quoniam primo Junii in aurora deo duce ingreditur portum nostrum: navis quedam a siculis traducta regionibus onusta grano: verumque utilium: geren[s] que homines plures ad negocia utiles bellica: nobis stupescentibus atque admirantibus que nam erat hec fiducia ut pertransiret per medium classis. Erat enim ut ita loquar mare iilud coagulatum garbasis. Nempe deo duce [velis]5 habundantius in altum erectis portum subiit atque intromittitur. O vere mirum et cunctis gentibus miraculum predicandum. Sanctus etenim Johannes cuius causa defenditur vehectorem eorum fuisse dinoscitur. Turris supradicta divi Nicolai quassata perforatur. Surgite mulieres civitati rhodi flentes sparsis crinibus ullulate: quoniam propugnaculum fidei nostre civitatis et portus ad terram deicitur: scilicet turris sancti Nicolai laxate affatim lacrimas gementes ante conspectum et figuram intemerate virginisque marie que tantis semper corruscavit miraculis: ut ante filium suum pro nobis velit sufragrari ac deprecari: Non ex meritis nostris quoniam pluribus annis elapsis iram altissimi merito incurrimus: sed merito gaudiorum que habuit in annunciatione et assumptione ut summa maiestas dei dignetur nos a manibus inimicorum eripere et hanc urbem servare.

Magna cum instantia construunt teucri adversus partem orientalem reparia machinarum suarum. Unde septima mensis inchoant nos meniaque nostra pesundare ea in parte supradicta poste nuncupate Italie: cuius caput tunc erat

On the last day of May, the Turks began to so batter the city with mortar shot that the shrapnel darkened the sky. At that point, the people were overwhelmed by violent terror. But for the action of divine and miraculous assistance, crazed men, avoiding sentry duty and wandering about, would have deserted the fortifications. Yet, the people chanted: "Oh, Our God, who created the world from time immemorial, who humbled the proud and sent angels and Jesus Christ, Savior of the World to those who always serve you. Rise up to assist us; free us from these enemies since you are the one God in substance and triune in persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And you, as king, should govern and direct all your providence. We seek that you act for us in accordance with your mercy. And so you shall not spurn the prayers of your servants, pay heed to those crying out to you. Remember their good deeds by which you have freed us from the hand of the Devil. We pray that you remember the mercy you had for the world and that you not permit us to be overwhelmed by the enemies of your Cross. Likewise remember that in the New Testament you are called the God of mercy and not of vengeance. Indeed, we have sinned when we have not obeyed your commands and our enemies are multiplied like the sand of the seashore. Moreover, we pray in eternal prayer that you remember your passion and goodness so you should not act against us and so these people should not say that Jesus Christ is not their

God."

The chanters did not cease their continual praise of the Divine in this manner because, at dawn on June 1, guided by God, a ship filled with grain entered our harbor, having crossed over from the region of Sicily. It was carrying many men who were useful for warlike matters. Even more stupendous and marvelous to us was its confidence in passing through the middle of the enemy fleet. Indeed, it was said the sea there was thick with sails. Truly by God's will, the ship, with its sails hoisted on high, approached and entered the harbor. Oh, this truly must be proclaimed a wondrous miracle by all men! And indeed, St. John himself, whose cause is being defended, was guiding the ship. The aforesaid tower of St. Nicholas is battered and broken. Rise and wail, women of the city of Rhodes, weeping with your disheveled hair, when the bulwark of the faith, of our city and harbor, that is, the tower of St Nicholas, is brought down to the ground. Let them, groaning, cry copious tears before the aspect and figure of the undefiled Virgin Mary, who radiates with great miracles; so that she wishes to intervene and to entreat for us before her son. Not from our merits (since for so many past years, we have justly incurred the wrath of the Most High) but rather from the merit of the joys which one holds in the Annunciation and Assumption, it is fitting that the supreme majesty of God should snatch us from the hands of our enemies and save this city.

The Turks with great speed built redoubts for their guns opposite the eastern part. From the seventh of the month, they began to pound us and our walls in the district of the Post of Italy. The commander of the site was the reverend Reverendus frater Merlus de piosascho vir prudens et in preliis expertus cuius consilio tota lingua et religio congaudet. his insuperque temporibus val[l]arunt omni exparte urbe urbem bombardis discurrentibus destruentibusue totam civitatem ponentes machinamenta sua a parte australi penes templum sancti Onofri vehementia saxa palmorum in girum novem: et a parte castri binas insuper posuere continue et incessanter discurrentes. Nihilominus advocatione ut fide tenemus intemerate illibateque virginis marie: ac gloriosissimi precursoris: quamquam destruent damnum hospic a usquequaque a[n]i[m] abus haud inferunt. Turris inter media poste ytalie saxis pesundata machinarum in colimem deducitur. Ex quo loco quedam littere sagittis connexe ad nos transmisse fuere [sunt] quarum tenor soli Reverentissimo domino cognitus est. Turris namque nuncupata divi Nicolai horrentia saxa suscepit ducenta et duodecim. Post cuius ruinam ut aggrederentur consuluere atque disposuerunt contra nostros aggressum dare.

Nocte media diei sequentis scilicet nona Junii cum clamoribus in ingentibus intonantibusque usque ad astra progrediuntur cum triremibus triginta ad aggressum turris que peroptime munita erat machinis et gentibus: quingenti

nempe viri ut protegerent turrim: ac propulsarent teucros locati stipendiis religionis per prudentissimum principem et sane fuerant: unde actum est tantis nostris machinis vexati nequivere littora carpere nostra. Adiungunt alia navigia minime possunt ingressum obtinere: et sic devenitur ad auroram usque terga prebentes inviti. in quo conflictu quingenti ex cis obiere. et totidem sautiati fuere: ut habuimus a transeuntibus ad nos. Attamen ab inceptis non desistunt mortariis die noctuque pesundando civitatem. Eodem equidem tempore celesti duo furesque depredabuntur arma bellantium eadem deicientes in mari volentes denique[6] dare fugam et accedent ad castra teucrorum suspenduntur ideo in foro. Ec cine merces eorum.

Omnes viri noscentes eamque dicitur posta ytalie debiliorem fore: eo etenim quoniam fossatum val[l]ans undique urbem in ea parte deficiebat: quia mare contiguum erat menis: et videntes vehementer earn quassatam saxis horrentibus consuluunt quid acturi sint pro reparatione memorum. Inter quos fide bona insurrexerunt ut rendum est. Quidam nobiles asserentes intra nostra menia fossatum proclivum a nostris perpetrare debere aliquibus saniori consilio preditis: et vere sic erat persuadentibus Reverentissimi principi videbatur earn rem et consilium: et menia nostra in arcem futura hostibus: hi vero fuerunt[7] quam plures huius sententia quorum animo erat et fuit ut reparium fieret father, Merlo de Piosascho,[11] a wise man and one experienced in battle, in whose advice every langue and Order rejoiced. Moreover at this time, the Turks laid siege to all parts of the city and fired their bombards from all its sides to destroy it completely. They set up their guns in the western part of the city near the Church of St. Onouphrius;[12] these, and the two guns set up in the vicinity of the castle, incessantly fired large stones nine palms in diameter. Notwithstanding the intercession, as we firmly believe, of the pure and undefiled Virgin Mary and the Glorious Precursor,[13] they damaged and destroyed houses everywhere, but did not harm a living soul. The tower in the middle of the Post of Italy was battered by cannonfire that reduced it to rubble. From this spot, certain letters attached to arrows were shot over to our side; their contents were only known to the most Reverend Lord [Pierre d'Aubusson].[14] The so-called tower of St. Nicholas was struck by two-hundred-and-twelve large stones. After its ruin, the Turks consulted and planned to launch an attack against us.

In the middle of the night of the following day (that is, June 9) with loud shouts thundering all the way to the stars, the Turks advanced with thirty galleys to attack the tower [of St. Nicholas], which was extremely well fortified with guns and men; for 500 men, stipendiaries of the Order who were stationed there by the most prudent prince and were uninjured, protected the tower and also drove back the Turks. Thus, it happened that, harassed by our largest guns, the Turks proved unable to capture our shorelines. They joined

the ships together, but could not force a landing; and as dawn broke they reluctantly retreated. In this action, 500 of their men were killed and just as many wounded, a fact we learned from troops who crossed over to our lines. Nevertheless, after beginning, they did not stop day and night battering the city with mortars. At the same time, two thieves had captured weapons, threw them in the sea, and then, wishing to take flight, approached the Turkish camp where they were hanged in its square.

All our men recognized the Turkish advantages and that the Post of Italy was indeed weakened, because the strong fosse that ringed all sides of the city ran out at that point and the sea was next to the wall. Seeing that the city walls there were violently shaken by large stones, they considered what had to be done for the repair of the walls. And some among them, in good faith, brought ideas to be carried out: some nobles advocated the construction of a ditch sloping away from our men within our walls. Provided with better counsel, the Most Reverend Prince was persuaded that this matter and plan might make our walls into an enemy stronghold. There were many of this opinion, who felt that a palisade, contignum meniis ex terra lapidibus et bruschis confectum: ita ingens veluti menia ut proculpulsarent ex ea hostes que res ad effectum deducta est ut intelliges posterius. Preparant se teucri contruentes in templo divi anthonii pontem ut transeant secundo ad turrem contra quam primo bellum iniere omni pacto volentes eam armis possidere: necesse vere erat ad eam devenire transfretando quodam pelagi parvum canale. Vim omnem atque conatum peragunt ut saltem eam obtineant: opinabantur quidem dominari civitati quam primum si possiderent eam turrem ut contra nos in arcem fieret: atque non admitteret navigia Christicolarum portum possidere: medius fidius ad id deventum fuisset. In his autem diebus reparia machinarum bina adversum postam lingue provintie.[8] Etiam magne eorum galeatie bine: e soria traducte cum gaudio vehementi classem ingrediuntur celum intonantur vocibus horum clamantium ullulantium ve nomen machomet prophanum semper tamen et absque instantia pesundamur saxis mortariorum et bombardis discurrentibus.

Quare adeste nunc o terrigene mortales considerateque prodigium immensum. Nam die dominico que ex decimaoctava Junii que insuper dies veri eo ante auroram pontem urgentibus et lignis effectum teucri in mari ponunt: et artificialiter ancoram intraposuere ut traherent ex ea pontem ut facilius perveniat ad turrim predictam. Ex nostris quidam liparniensis quatuor ex suis transmisit natando qui eandem detulerunt ingenti cum letitia: sed in crepusculo diei aggrediuntur eandem turrim cum multitudine galearum: fustarum: palandarearumque: et cum barchis transvectis artificialiter a parte terre: refertis genisaris principalioribus in quibus erant tres super stes galearum magnarum capitaneus natholie. tertius vero maioris existimationis qui gener

filii teucrorum principis dinoscebatur. Ceteri equidem pertransibant pontem nephandissimo cum ullulatu nomen prophanum machomet invocantes iesu christique salvatoris blasphemantes celum replebatur vocibus eorum. Sed nostri clipeati primum salutis clipeo pontem fregerunt: destruxeruntque fonditus. accipientes barchas in naufragium deducendo triremesque plures et fus[t]e[9] a nostris machinis[10] transforate deglutiuntur in pelagus. Unde hi tres principaliores hoc in bello perire. Ex genisaris mille sufFocati in mari reperiuntur: omnes insuper qui nostra littora carpserant a nostris crudelissime

touching the city walls and constructed of earth, stones, and branches, should be built. Thus, from this huge wall-like structure, they would be able to strike the enemy from a long distance – something which actually took place, as you will see later. The Turks began the construction of a bridge near the Church of St. Anthony so they could cross over to the tower against which they had begun the war, wishing to possess it by armed assault. It was necessary to accomplish this by crossing a small arm of the sea. They directed all their strength and energy to accomplish at least this. They thought they could take control of the city if they first took control of this tower, so they could make it into a stronghold against us and Christian ships would not be able to gain access to the harbor; but this last was accomplished with the aid of faith. Moreover, during these days, the Turks set up two artillery redoubts opposite the Post of the Langue of Provence.[15] Also at that time, two Turkish galleys, having crossed over from Syria, joined their fleet amid great joy. Their voices, shouting out and wailing the profane name of Muhammad, resounded to the heavens. In the meantime, we were pounded incessantly and without respite by shot fired from mortars and bombards.

Therefore pay attention now, oh earthly inhabitants, and consider the immense miracle. For on Sunday, June 18, before day had dawned, the Turks constructed a bridge on the sea by laying down lumber: and they skillfully fitted an anchor at intervals they could haul so they could walk across the bridge and more easily travel to the aforesaid tower. A certain one of our men from the island of Lipari sent across four of his swimmers who reached the bridge and dislodged it with much rejoicing.[16] Yet at twilight, after skillfully carrying their ships across a neck of land, the Turks attacked the tower with a large number of galleys, fustes, and *palandarias.* In this attack, the three commanders of the largest galleys were Janissaries. The third of these, the captain of Anatolia, was recognized as a man of great reputation, and was the son-in-law of the Turkish prince's own son.[17] Other Turks were crossing the bridge, letting out the most shameful wailing, invoking the name of the Prophet Muhammad and blaspheming Jesus Christ. The heavens were filled with their voices. But our soldiers, armed with shields, broke through the bridge and thoroughly destroyed it. Some enemy ships were wrecked and

captured, while our guns pierced through many of their galleys that broke apart on the sea. At this point in the action, the three principal commanders died. A thousand Janissaries were found drowned in the sea; besides this, all who reached our shores were most cruelly killed by interficiuntur: capitaque eorum rnulta turribus nostris pendent: mare ex eorum cruore rubricato populo decantante. O intemerata et ineternum benedicta virgo singularis mater altissimique appellaris: sed tuum presidium confugimus: que iure advocata nostra et peccatorum nominaris.[11] Defensatrixque nostra precipue subisidio approbaris: in adiutorium nostrum que sumus adveni: et ante filium tuum preces funde: ubera et pectus ostende: quibus unicum salvatorem in ventre portasti et ablactasti: et salvatorem mundi mundo genuisti: tuque nos reple luce que filium vidisti morientem in cruce. Unica spes nostra aut relinquas tibi deditos: et ante figuram tuam genua flectentes. Sed oculis misericordie ad te conversos aspice et opitulari: filiis tuis non desine: quia tu sola mundo gaudium tulisti: et paradisi portas animabus aperuisti gaudiumque sanctorum patrum fuisti.

Raptim hostes sicuti deventum est rentes non sine dispendio corporum eorum nostra demum menia conscendere populo conciniatorem sub fideiussione destinandum fore decreverunt qui denique dixit bassia. O viri quorum fama luculentissima belli: prudentiaque supra modum expolliti vehementer miratur: que nam causa extat: que potentia: que arma: que denique presidia morantur ut velitis pari lance eum qui dominantur p[a]ene toti mundo preliari: nonne circumcepti classe: nonne circum vallati gente: nonne iam iam (sic) in totum quassati machinamentis et morte: vere neque potentiores neque sapientiores ceteris christicolis. qui regi nostro annua imposita tributa persolvunt. Sat agite igitur sapienter oratorem vestrum eidem porrigere. Ercle namque talis conventio fiet qualem peroptabitis.

Nostri postremo admiramur equidem non mediocre insultus vestros calidos et rante novitatis adventum. Bassieque vestre referretis: potentiam tuam haud pertimescimus: armaque tua non formidamus: cum rege insuper tuo pacem inire et confederari nequaquam desideramus: Regio hec christicola gentibus subici: neque lege: neque tributo: neque pace: vultque conventio christi cum Belial. Si pacem perquirebas classe insulamque urbem vallare non debebas: quamvis prudentiores non simus: his qui regi nostro annua persolvunt tributa: nihil minus animo bene fortiores. Nos vero dicimur milites fidem iesu defendentes armis atque precincti pro cadem mori potius quam ditioni vestre subiici cupientes: discedite: nec amplius menis appropinquare concupiscite Si aurea optatis vita degere: Mirabile dictu teucer our men. They hung many of the Turkish heads on our towers; the sea was made red from the enemy gore. All the while our people were chanting: "Oh undefiled and eternal blessed Virgin, extraordinary mother, may you appeal to the most high. We trust in

your protection and that you may be named as advocate for our right and that of our sins; and as our defender you will approve in particular of our succor and come as our helper whom we desire. Pour our prayers before your son. Show your bosom and breast from which you suckled the one and only Savior whom you had carried in your womb from which you brought into the world the savior of the world. You, who saw your son dying on the cross, fill us with light. Our only hope is to kneel before the relics dedicated to you and before your statue. But behold and help the eyes turned to you for mercy. Do not abandon your sons, since you alone have brought joy into the world, have opened the gates of paradise for souls, and were the joy of the holy fathers."[18]

Suddenly, it seemed, the enemy, realizing they could not climb our walls without the loss of their men, arranged a messenger under a safe conduct to announce what the Pasha said: "O most splendid men of fame in war, highly distinguished for prudence that everyone admires, what reason exists, what power, what weapons, in short, what force that you are willing to do battle on the same scale as he who rules over almost the entire world? Are you not surrounded by a fleet? Are you not ringed by an entrenched army? Are you not by now entirely battered by artillery and death? Truly, you are neither wiser nor more powerful than the other Christians who pay the annual tribute imposed by our king. You would do wisely, therefore, to offer the same through your ambassador. For, by Hercules! you should desire such an agreement should be made."

Our spokesman replied: "We, for our part, are not surprised by your trivial insults, your rashness, and the appearence of new violence. You may tell this to your Pasha: 'We are hardly afraid of your power. We have no dread of your weapons. Besides, we in no way desire to conclude an alliance or make peace with your king. Christians have not been subject to the people of this king by law, tribute, or treaty. He wants a treaty between Christ and the Devil. If you wish peace, you should not besiege the island and city with a fleet. We are not wiser than any of those men who pay annual tribute to your king and yet are no less well resolved in our courage. Indeed, we proclaim that our soldiers defending the faith of Jesus Christ, and girded with weapons, desire to be slaughtered rather than subordinated to you. Leave! Don't desire to approach our walls any longer if you want to keep living your precious life!'"[19] Marvelous to say, a Turk, led unus frustratus sua denique caliditate precique conductus. Quid non mortalia pectora cogisa: uri sacra fames: menia nostra cotidie circummeare donatur: taliaque fari: haud feritus est. Non preteribunt multi dies: o rodigene: quibus aspicientibus vobis: virgines vestre deflorabuntur: et ense collapso sanguine vestro affatim madebit tellus. Non vos pigeat quosque electissimos puberos futures: siquidem genisaros subripiemus: spoliisque vestris inebriabimur. Nihil idcirco tunc proderunt genua prove

lutorum excuseque vestrorum lacrime." Quibus intellectis Reverentissimus p[etrus] quatuor ex nostris in antemurali dimissis eundern abripi vi iubet teucris ei opitulari non valentibus desperate intromittitur. Accurrunt demum Kostes pro tuitione eius numero mille. Nostre namque strennue dimicantes balistis et spingardis. Bombardisue ter decem ex hostibus feriendo extinxere. Coactique sunt ea semita repedere qua venere. s postremo pallo infigitur more turcorum.

Supervenienti annuali sole[mn] itate[12] ut moris semper erat in nocte ignis suspenditur scilicet gloriosissimi Joannis septem turribus nostris campanulis pulsantibus machinisque nostris spingardarum bombardarumque quibus admodum urbs hec premunita existit hostes contra proiectis luminaribus undequaque navigiis nostris suprapositis opinati fuere [sunt] teucri nos classem aggressuros qua ex re delirantes per vias et vicos linquentes montana ad succurrendum classi procedentes quatuorcentum ex eis machine nostre pessundarunt referentibus nobis his qui continue civitatem ingrediuntur, teucri enim vero omni ex parte a nostri vulnerati in dies rentes impossibile fore via regia meniis appropriare: nec muros nostras totaliter in colimem posse deducere viam subterraneam in modum vipere productam diversis in locis. apertamque lignis maioribus in opitulationem eorum peragere deferentes cratas ex virgultis contestas ut possent faciiius appropinquari meniis sagittis crudelioribus nostras interimere, Enimuero immilites gloriosi Johannis ceterique clipeati circa murorum excubias die noctu que strennue dimicabant hostium impigre molimina propulsantes. Attamen ipsi reparia lignorum ingentia patrarunt ut facilius premeditato effectu patirentur. scilicet protecti his usque ad murum iam iam in columem deductum ascenderent nostris id vetare non valentibus. Unde bastiana eftecta inirabilitcrque confecta in arcem contra nos deventa sunt: repleveruntque ea spingardis hominibusque sagittariis cumulatissime semperque nostras vexantibus perforaruntque murum fossatorum nostrorum reimplentes terra et lapidibus timor et tremor nos concutiunt et p[a]ene via belli desperatur de victoria.

astray by his own rashness, cried out then: "What kind of inhuman souls do you think burn holy sites, spread famine, and daily surround one's walls. You could hardly punish such terrible acts. Not many days will pass, oh Rhodians, and you will see your virgins raped and the soil will be thoroughly sodden with your blood spilled by the sword. It will disgust you. The most select of your children will become the most deceitful Janissaries and we will become intoxicated with your spoils. The kneeling, excuses, and tears of your powerful men will then accomplish nothing." After hearing this, the Most Reverend Pierre dispatched four of our men onto the outer rampart, ordering them to capture him by force from the Turks, as he was brought into our lines, the

Turks despaired of aiding him. The enemy, numbering a thousand, finally retreated for their own safety. Our men fighting energetically with ballistas, spingards, and bombards killed thirty of the enemy. The enemy was forced to retreat along the narrow path by which they had come. Soon after, in accordance with Turkish custom, he was impaled on a stake.

Upon the annual celebration of the most glorious St. John the Baptist,[20] fire, as always, was hung from seven of our towers at night. With our bells ringing, and our artillery (spingards and bombards, with which this city was fortified), firing burning projectiles towards the enemy from our ships positioned around them, the Turks assumed we would attack their fleet. In a frenzy because of this, the Turks fled to the mountains by the roads and paths. Four hundred of the enemy going ahead to relieve their fleet were cut down by our artillery; those who continued to march toward the city also were driven back towards our men. All of the Turks in this sector were wounded at this time, making it impossible for them to advance on our walls by the royal highway. Nor were they totally able to withdraw from our walls on to the high ground or along the lower road that advanced like a snake through different places. Hesitating to aid their men by passing through the openings in the larger wooden redoubt, they fought from behind wicker hurdles so they could very easily approach our walls to kill our men with cruel arrows. The Knights of the glorious St. John and certain soldiers, keeping watch night and day around the walls, fought with a diligent energy in turning back all the efforts of the enemy. Nevertheless, the Turks completed their huge shelters of lumber so they might more easily fulfill their premeditated plan – protected by these, they could climb up all the way to our walls and then withdraw unharmed, without our brave men being able to prevent it. Then putting up an amazing building, a bulwark, on the defenses, they attacked us from it. They closely filled the bulwark with spingards and archers. These forces, constantly harassing our men, broke through our wall and filled our fosses with earth and stones. Fear and trembling so shook us that we nearly lost hope of gaining victory through arms!

Tunc actum est ab illo a quo cuncta procedunt bona. Insurrexit quidam magister Joannes anihoa natione buschonius coram principe asserns se velle eorum barrachas in totum destruere. Astruxitque fideliori modo velle trabuchum facere artificioso modo: et quodam modo divino confectum proiciens saxa magna: destruentiaque teucrorum bastiona. Ex nostris quidam putabant inaniter se iactare. Voluntate summi dei fit: id et proiectum aspicimus continue eorum barrachas fonditus destruens proiciensque eminus et cominus prout a magistro commensurabatur. In subsidium quoque eius bine machine nostre maiores ordinantur in barbacana poste ytalie: similiter teucros occidentes. Unde die noctuque clangor et ullulatus eorum auditur. Insuper

operati sumus fossam per viam mine ut evacuaretur nostrum fossatum contiguum mari p[a]ene usque ad summum a teucris lapidibus et terra repletum. Etiam bis nostri egressi quamquam pauci capita aliquorum turcorum sex detulerunt in civitate que turribus nostris pendent: crede necnon absque instantia ab eorum machinamentis diebus et noctibus pesundatos fore.

Unus est verus deus dominus noster iesus christus quia operatur mirabilia magna solus: fustula quedam ab insula nostraper transit classem hostium deferens tabellas magnipotentis soldani. Reverentissimo domino et principi prudentissimo gratiosas policentis. Is devarios gentem granum omnia denique et necessaria futura civicati: offerensque se principaliorem capitaneum suum si oportunum erit in occursum destinate. O christianum genus cuius deus verus est dominus iesus christus ab eterno a patre genitus: temporaliter vero ex matre natus: qui ut salvaret genus humanum crucem pati maluit quam ipsum perire: cuius advocata singularis et precipue est virgo intemerata maria dei mater et regina poli: cur tam sopiri estis et excordes ut perire premittatis genus vestrum occurrite succurrito et opitulamini nobis in insula positis quibus fas non est fugere nec posse certum est mementore in posterum quid futurum sit nec permittatis inimicum christi et crucis in tantis prosperari et adversus vestram gentem malignam: nec permittas rhodum grece quod latine malum punicum interpretatur a gentibus pessundari et notanter malum punicum rodum est quia clavis partium orientalium verissime appellari potest. Etiamque navis quedam nuncupata palomari viros bellicosos centum ferens ingreditur portum hostibus invitis: nostri namque

Then He, from whom all good proceeds, took action. A certain master, John Anihoa, a Basque by nationality, proclaimed before the prince that he wanted to totally destroy the enemy tents. He committed himself in a credible way to skillfully construct a trebuchet. After he had completed it in a certain divine manner, it discharged large stones which destroyed the Turkish bulwark. Some of our men thought it was shooting inaccurately, but it happened by the will of the Supreme God we watched it continually discharging, destroying all the enemy tents, and operating at long and close range just as the master estimated. Two of our larger guns were set up in reserve on the barbican of the Post of Italy. They killed Turkish forces there also, and the din and wailing of the enemy was heard day and night. We likewise worked by means of a mine to clear out our trench which the Turks had filled with stones and earth from where it touched the sea all the way to the summit. Our men sallied out twice and a few of them brought back into the city the heads of some six Turks to hang on our towers. Do not think, however, that our men were under no pressure; they were battered night and day bv the enemy artillery.

There is one true God, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, since He alone works great miracles. A certain pouch bearing messages concerning the great power of the

Sultan was carried out from our island and passed through the enemy fleet. "From the most reverend lord and most prudent prince [Pierre] with the offer of greetings. He [the Pasha] now offers grain and other necessities to the different people and will do so in the future. He offered one that he would be the principal captain if it was determined to be suitable after his arrival. O Christian people whose true God is the Lord Jesus Christ born before all eternity from the Father, but born from his mother in this world who to save humankind chose to perish, suffer, and die on the cross. His single and special intercessor is the undefiled Virgin Mary, mother of God and queen of the heavens. Why are you so lazy and silly as to let your people be destroyed? Come to the aid of those who need aid and you help us who are stationed on this island for whom it is not fitting to flee. Nor certainly can one commemorate in the past what will be in the future. Nor may you permit the enemy of Christ and the Cross to succeed in such great matters Neither are future events certain to one who remembers the past and you are not permitting the protection of Christ and the Cross to succeed in such crucial matters and against your maligned people. Nor should you allow the Greeks of Rhodes to interprete the battering of the Latins as a punishment for an evil people. Nor should it be considered an evil punishment, since Rhodes can truly be called the key to the eastern regions."[21] A certain ship named "The Dovecote," which carried one hundred fighting men, then entered our harbor despite enemy opposition.[22] Indeed, our thankful men stationed at the ad turrim divi Nicolai residentes ingrati cum gaudio vociferantes exultarunt teucris in stuporem vehementer adductis.

Christe salvator mundi adiuva nos. quondam magis ac magis vexamur mortariis et bombardis discurrentibus plus solito. O res mira septem eorum machine horarim incessanter proicientibus novem diebus vix contriti aspiramus. Experto ercle crede tria milia saxa ab extris computatis lapidibus in girum vallastis a sex palmorum mensuris usque ad undecim ex adverso contra suscepimus: obmissis aliis innumerabilibus ab infra tribus etenim [?] mensibus in hac insula degere teucri. Unde non credas impossible: sed verum lingua nempe mea fari nequiret pesundationem adversum urbem effectum per hostes. si lingue centum mihi forent: oraque centum unum solamen et miraculosissimum demonstratum cognovimus: quondam tales nos gratia spiritus altissimi perfecit: utique mors neque gladius ultoris neque palii preperati ad oculos pro crudelitate aterreret immo verius videbantur saxa in locis contraiecta haud non habita aut in quibus populus non residebat. Navigia in portu locata. p[a]ene omnia vulnerantur a copia eorum machinarum. Equidem quinqueque turres a parte orientali adiacentes et contingue usque ad humum deppresse quamquam forent calcer saxis in totum replete: per ymanissios teucros fuere qui dicuntur tres harum poste italice. altere bine

lingue provintie. Urbs nihilominus hec distinguitur christicularum linguis octo. Prima dicitur provintia. Secunda alvernia: cuius gentis prudentissimum principem fore cognosce. Tertia francia possidens arcem in qua sita reperitur mirabili artificio atque glosa argenti predita tote ecclesia precursoris in qua cerimonialiter et seriose: moroseque. Aprime nomen iesu christi laudatur. Quarta ytalie contra quam teucri bellum iniere. Quinta aragonia et cathalonia. Sexta anglia in ordine angelice terre. Septia alamania. Octava et ultima castilia et portugal. Jesu. Judicio in rebus gerendis vel deducendis agminibus totum quod fit finitur inchoatum: prostergata quacunque mundiali potentia: nemo magnanimus: nemo primas: nemo gnarus armorum: nisi quem is perfecerit. Hoc ideo infero quia post erumnas: post labores: postque demum mortes varias hostium nostrorum.

Vigesimaseptima mensis Julii aggressuri nostra menia se preparant: primo mane contra missis ictibus et saxis plurimis horrentibus magnarum machinarum insperate quando popuius ad refrigerandum corpora que olim laxa fuerant ex vigilia nocturna progressus fuerat. Illico genisari primates Azapi [Amapi] et Spadini: hoc triplici genere nuncupatur bellatorum: quilibet ex eis menia tower of St. Nicholas, shouting for joy, howled out in astonishment bringing a violent response from the Turks.

Christ, Savior of the world, help us since more and more we are harassed by mortars and bombards firing more than was customary. What an amazing thing it was that seven of their artillery pieces were incessantly firing every hour for nine days and we scarcely wasted breath. We had found out (directly from the Turks, by Hercules!) that 3,000 stone shot ranging six to eleven palms in circumference were fired from and against our lines. Indeed, we have omitted discussion of the other innumerable barrages from the three months when the Turks remained on the island. You may not think it possible, but my tongue cannot truly express the battering the enemy unleashed on the city. If I had a hundred tongues and a hundred voices, I would acknowledge the one aid that was clearly so miraculous; that is, that the grace of the Most High Spirit so filled us that we had no fear of death by either the sword of the avenger or the stakes prepared for such cruel purposes before our very eyes. Stones were launched into urban districts which were almost uninhabited or where no people at all lived. Nearly all of our ships in the harbor were damaged from the great number of enemy artillery. Five towers next to or near the eastern side of the city were knocked down to the ground and were all but paved over and filled with stones. There were those from the most cruel Turks who said that three of these were from the Post of Italy and the other two from the langue of Provence. Nevertheless, the city was divided into eight Christian langues. The first is called that of Provence. The second of Auvergne, whose people would acknowledge the most prudent prince as their leader. The third is that of the

French in which was located the citadel, where there was, miraculously and skillfully discovered, a great mass of silver bestowed on the Church of the Precursor in which the name of Jesus Christ was chanted ceremoniously, seriously, and slowly at prime [each day]. The fourth is that of Italy and against it the Turks had begun the war. The fifth is that of Aragon and Catalonia. The sixth is that of England for the Order of the English lands. The seventh is that of Germany and the eighth and last that of Castile and Portugal. To Jesus, judge in carrying out all these matters or in scattering armies drawn up in formation, let all that has been begun be finished in prostrating each of the earthly powers. No one is so magnanimous, so foremost, and so experienced in arms except the one whom He has perfected. Therefore, I come to this conclusion after the charges, labors, and finally after the varied deaths of both the enemy and of our own men.

On 27 July, the Turks were preparing to attack our walls. At dawn, they unexpectedly unleashed many barrages of large stones shot from their large guns when our people, just relieved from night watch, were going to cool off their bodies. On that spot, the first men of the Janissaries, the 'Azabs, and the Sipāhīs (as their three types of warriors were called) secretly climbed over the walls that had been weakened and battered by artillery. Marching through their debiliora atque machinis pressa conscendunt clamdestini: et per fossata eorum patrata progressi: presidioque illico trucidato: statimque dominantur muro ex eis duo milia. Ceteri nanque eorum tanquam arena maris ad prope. Et ascendens in planicien convenerant superpositisque eorum vexillis contra nostros bellum iniunt. Octo tunc ex nostris pro defensione reperti fuere: qui victoriose conflixere: quorumque laus et merces non peribit usquequo clangente buccina: campanaque armorum pulsata occurreret ingens collectio populi. Reverentissimus quidem princeps prudentissime: et virili animo clipeatus primus hostes invasit: feriens occidit propria manu quosdam ex eis vultu placido et lingua affabili populum in fugam p[a]ene conversum ad conflictum attrahebat: hic Samson: hic Judas machabeus: hic vere Josue. Succursus vehemens in instanti adventi protegentibus usque ad tempus id tribus huius e poste capitaneis ordinatis cum comilitonibus dextro cornu Admiratus ytalie. Reverendum fratrem merlus de piocescho sinistra baiulus comerchii rhodi: frater zarlotus lingue provincie. Inter medio presidio. Magnificus dominus anthonius de aubouson germanus Reverendissimi principis qui protegentes postam procul pulsarunt teucros: nec permisere descensum eis obtinere. Advocatur denique bellantium succursus sistentium pro defensione turris divi Nicolai. Accurrunt velociter hi postremo cum exercitu suo Sed nostri interea tanta eorum vexilla prospicientes supra nostra menia erigunt vexillum mirabiliter consitum figure crucifixi inter medie a parte priori insignia glorisissime virginis a parte posteriori gloriosissimi

Joannis baptiste incontinenti erecto se dedere precipites taliter in descensu Angelo domini p ersequente eos que abreptis eorum vexillis a nostris ex his qui ab exteris residebant principalioribus tria milia occisi reperiuntur in fossatis nostris. Sicque confracti et concussi taliter discessere: non tamen crede mihi humana virtute factum. quoniam iure belli dominati fuerant urbi. et in posterum faciliter civitatem cepissent: sed omnis nostra opitulatio miraculosa demonstratur per advocationem virginis gloriose et Joannis baptiste inter medii a nostris circa .ccc. genisari animosiori locati fuerunt: qui trucidati ridiculum effecti sunt populo die. Cadaveraque eorum in mari demerguntur.

Exultatio ingens a populo celebratum: et ignis in nocte suspenditur turribus nostris. Ex nostris ex mortui viginti reperiuntur. decem scilicet milites recently-completed trench and slaughtering our garrison there, two thousand of their men suddenly gained control of the wall. Innumerable others (as many as the sands of the sea) did likewise nearby. Climbing up on to the plain, they assembled and, after planting their ensigns in front of them, commenced battle against our forces. Then eight of our men who were prepared for defense victoriously clashed in combat. The praise of and mercy for these men would not pass away until the sounding of the final trumpet.[23] With the pealing of bells and clatter of weapons, a huge mass of people rushed to the attack. Indeed, the most reverend prince skillfully and courageously attacked the first row of enemy soldiers. Striking with his own hand, he killed several of them; with his calm expression and friendly banter, this Samson, this Judas Maccabeus, this true Joshua recalled to the battle our people who had almost turned and run away from it. [24] He unleashed a violent attack along with the defenders until the three captains arrayed at the Post [of Italy] joined their fellow soldiers. On the right wing, these included the admiral of Italy, the reverend brother, Merlo de Piosascho; on the left there were the bailiff of the Rhodian commerca, and Fra Zarlo of the langue of Provence. Among the middle guard was the magnificent lord, Anthony d'Aubusson (brother of the most reverend prince), who defending the Post, struck the Turks from a distance and did not allow them to gain a way down. So then, the force of reserve troops was stopped and diverted for the defense of the tower of St. Nicholas. Then they swiftly rushed to attack with their army. But in the meantime, our men, seeing so many of their battle flags in front of them, marvelously raised over the city walls our banner, which consisted of a figure of a crucifix in the middle with the insignia of the Blessed Virgin in the foreground and the most glorious St. John the Baptist in the background. As soon as they raised it, our men gave themselves over to the attack down the slope. With an angel of the Lord pursuing those Turks who had snatched their battle ensigns from our men and from those who remained from the principal Turkish force, three thousand were found slaughtered in our trenches. Yet,

believe me, cutting down those whose ranks are broken and shaken in this way is not done by any human courage. Though by the law of war, the Turks were then in control of the city and had easily captured it, yet all our miraculous aid was proven for our men, who found themselves in the middle of nearly three hundred of the Janissaries, by the intercession of the glorious Virgin and John the Baptist. The slaughter of these Turkish troops was made into a joke by the people of God and their corpses were thrown into the sea.

The people celebrated a huge triumph and hung torches from our towers at night. It was found that twenty of our men had been killed. Ten of these sancti Joannis qui gloriose vitam finiuere: inter quos viriliter vita tentus[13] est Bayulus alamanus: una cum aliquibus quorum memoria ineternum permanebit: sauciati vero circa ducentum.

Zelus domus tue nobis demonstratus fuit: o gloriose precursor salvatoris: intercessione namque tua liberati decantamus salvatori populusque dicebat. Cantemus domino: gloriose ctcrnuin[14] magnificatus est: equum et assensorem devicit in mare.[15] Teucri finaliter tali via et in toturn confracti excogitant: de recessu intromittentes eorum machinas et auferentes a nobis: neque amplius ex his conquassantes nos incedentes destructioni. Insule nostre igneque eorum ardent possessionum hospitia inter que tempora applicuere bine naves transmisse per S. R. Ferdinandum fidelissimum christicolam atque alme religionis Joannis baptiste unicum protectorem cum viris clipeatis per eundem destinatis numero mille: que tamen vexantur aliqualiter ab eorum machinis contra quas classis progreditur. Navis vero cui titulus est sancta maria tamquam colis inter eam salutat eos salutatione letali: pluresque eorum in illo agressu obire vitam. Decima octava autem Augusti teucri linquunt insulam transferuntque se in turchiam. Finito compendiolo parvulo gratias referndum deo dijudico. Et si quid ineptem dixi veluti certus sum: veniam deposco nimia victus tua caritate germane mi hec describere paucis curavi atque ut fructu vescaris orientali: has ad te transmittere carissimas proposui.

Oratio edita per reverendum fratrem Jacobum de curte ordinis Augustinensium. Impressum Venetiis per magistrum Erhardum radtolt de Augusta.

who gloriously ended their lives were Knights of St. John. Among those who courageously offered up their lives was the Bailiff of Germany, along with the others whose reputation will remain eternal. Nearly two hundred of the defenders were wounded.

O glorious Precursor of the Savior, the hatred of your house [order] has been shown to us. Indeed, we who were liberated by your intercession, chant to the Savior. The people said: "We sing to the Lord, who is gloriously magnified for all eternity; who has thrown the horse and rider into the sea."[25]

The Turks, finally perceiving they were totally exhausted from such a course of action, withdrew from us and left behind their artillery. No longer shaken by the guns, we destroyed them by fire. The flames from the Turkish possessions lit up the dwellings of our island. During this period, the Hospital applied for aid, and two ships with one thousand soldiers were sent by His Majesty Fernando, the most faithful Christian and the only protector of the most high order of St. John the Baptist. These ships were somewhat harassed by enemy guns as the Turkish fleet sallied out against them. Indeed the ship, which was named the Santa Maria, went through it [the fleet] as if through a strainer, and greeted them with a lethal salutation. Many of the enemy lost their lives in this attack. What is more, on 18 August the Turks left the island and went back to Turkey. Having finished this small compendium, thanks must be given to God the Judge. And if I have said anything inaccurate as if I was certain, I beg, brother, the favor of your great support and charity as I have described these events in a few words so you may consume this fruit of the east. I thus have proposed to send these most dear things to you.

Oration composed by the reverend brother Jacobo de Curte of the Augustinian Order. Printed at Venice by Master Erhard Radtolt de Augusta.

1 All biographical information about Curte comes from David Aurelius Perini, *Bibliographia augustiniana cum notis biographicis. Scriptores itali.* 4 vols.: *Praetermissi.* (Firenze: Tipografia Sordomuti, 1929–1937) pp. 283–284.

2 M. Mariani, "La laurea in leggi di giasone del maino," *Bollettino della Società pavese di storia patria,* 3 (1903): 240–241. Francesco Curte died in 1500.

3 Jacobus de Curte, *De urbis Rhodiae obsidione a. 1480 a Turcis tentata* (Venice: Erhard Ratdolt, [after 18 Aug. 1480]), ISTC no. ic00994000; Gesamtkatalog, 7860. The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München, has published an electronic facsimile: stable url: http://nbnresolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00050370–1.

4 Mizzi, *Leguerre di Rodi,* pp. 68–87.

1 Rhodes.

2 Francesco Curte was a master of both Canon and Roman law.

3 A reference to Cicero and his orations.

4 Pope Sixtus IV.

5 Frederick III, holy Roman emperor.

1 Venice: acquili.

6 Dupuis agrees with Curte that the knight's name was Peter, but says he was Catalan.

2 Venice: ercle.

3 Venice: iam iam.

7 This is Curte's only mention of Master George.

8 The Church of St. John the Baptist. This church was located near the Master's Palace, the best fortified part of the city. The Turks were moving their guns away from the harbor

and the tower of St. Nicholas and closer to the city itself.

9 Curte is in agreement with the other sources that the Turks brought sixteen large artillery pieces that fired shot nine palms in diameter.

10 This was the post nearest to the wall of the Jews.

4 Psalm 34, 2.

5 Venice: vellis.

6 Venice: demque.

7 Venice: fuerunt.

11 The prior of Lombardy.

12 Constructed ca. 1390 outside the walls of Rhodes: see Luttrell, *The Town of Rhodes 1306–1356* (Rhodes, 2003), p. 47, n. 225.

13 St. John the Baptist.

14 According to Caoursin, the letters read "Beware of Master George."

8 Venice: "provintie" printed twice.

9 Venice: fusce.

10 Venice: marchinis.

15 This lay along the city walls west of the tower of Italy.

16 Lipari is an island in the Tyrrhenian Sea, near Sicily. Caoursin records only one sailor sabotaged the bridge.

17 According to Caoursin, this was the son-in-law of Mehmet; Dupuis writes "Le Capitaine des natelies & Merlabay gendre du fils du Turc." Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes,* p. 79, identifies the two men as Ibrahim Bey, son-in-law of Mehmet, and Merlah Bey, Admiral of the Galleys.

11 Similar to Anselm of Canterbury's prayer to the Virgin and St. John the Baptist, *Oratio LIII.*

18 This appears to be a variation of "O Intemerata," a popular medival prayer to the Virgin and John the Baptist.

19 This dialogue is similar to the parley Caoursin reports, but Curte's version is less rhetorical and more colorful.

12 Venice: solennitate.

20 June 24th.

21 This is the only record we have of a magisterial letter composed and transmitted during the siege. The tone is similar to other letters d'Aubusson wrote immediately before and after; the text of this letter, however, has not survived in the Order's main archives.

22 Curte is the only source for the entry of a ship into the harbor at this point in the siege.

23 For literal-minded readers, Curte means "the end of time."

24 Caoursin also compared d'Aubusson and his personal defense of the walls to the Maccabees.

13 Venice: fentus.

14 Venice: eternim.

15 Exodus 15:1.

25 From Exodus 15:1, the song Moses and the Israelites sang after escaping Pharoh's army by crossing the Red Sea.

# Appendix
# Selected Magisterial Bulls

1. Letter from Master Giovanni Battista Orsini to Fra Bertrand de Cluix, prior of France, telling of the Ottoman capture of Negroponte. AOM 379, ff. 1v-3v, 25 August 1470; published F. Molard, "Lettre du grand maitre de l'ordre de Rhodes," *Bulletin historique et philologique du Comite des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (Paris, 1891): 63–68, copy from Arch, de l'Yonne. H. 2211 (Supplement), addressed to Fra Gerard Duhem, prior of Champagne.

Frater Baptista de Ursinis, etc., et nos conventus etc, Venerabili ac religioso magistro, nobis precarissimo, fratri Bertrando de Cluix, prioratus nostri Francie prior, salutem in dominio, et nostris parere mandatis.

Non sine cordis nostri gravi amaritudine calamitates et nobis impendentes jacturas, significare possumus. Accepit dudum Oriens dolenda admodum et teterrima vulnera, cum Turcorum princeps truculentissimus, regiam illam et imperialem magni Constantini urbem suo adiecit imperio, et cum vires dilatans in Lempnum et Lesbum, celebres insulas, ingenti classe parata, exercitum destinavit, quas brevi et intollerabili pugna adeptus est. Fuere profecto he clades gravissime, ubi tot sclera, tot cedes, tot crudelitatis genera apparuere. Sed non minora existimanda sunt, que hodierna die, ipse Turcorum rex nephandissimus, scelesto concepit animo, et que christiane religioni et christicolis orientalibus intulit. Continebat prius classem intra angustias Helespontis maris; verebatur quoque Yonium, Kgeurn atque Carpatium mare navigare, et classem ad insulas Cicladas delendas, ob christianorum potentatum mittere timebat. Nunc vero, preteritis victoriis estuans, intrepide cum superioribus mensibus grandem classem in littore Galipolis edificasset, maximo cinctus apparatu maritimo, et non minoribus terrestribus copiis munitus, Helespontum exivit, Egeumque mare plenis velis navigans, Euripum, insulam celeberrimam, continenti propinquam, aggressus est.

Ibi pontes ligneos miro artificio struxit, quo transitus facilior in insulam commilitonibus pateret, machinas, et diversa tormentorum genera, quibus menia urbis Nigropontis dirueret, in oppositis littoribus collocavit; priusquam eam urbem armorum vi adoriri statuisset, decrevit incolarum animos temptare, si sese dedicioni subicere velient. Qui, firmatis suis presidiis, forti constantique animo pocius extrema omnia perpeti, quam dedicionem indecoram subire, responderunt. Et ita cives illius inclite, urbis, et in qui presidio loci erant jureiurando adacti, tutari et urbem defendere exquisitis ac munitissimis remediis, parant. Non animos fide orthodoxa munitos, immanissimi inimici

mine terruerunt, non ex agitata ingenia a constancia dimoverunt, non insultuum ac appugnacionum assiduorum impetus, fortes viros consternari valuerunt. Oppugnant et aggredientur turci validissimis viribus civitatem Nigropontis; non desunt cothidiani impetus ut muros scandant, peritissimus quisque prout

1. Letter from Master Giovanni Battista Orsini to Fra Bertrand de Cluix, prior of France, telling of the Ottoman capture of Negroponte. AOM 379, ft. lv -3v, 25 August 1470; published F. Molard, "Lettre du grand maitre de l'ordre de Rhodes," *Bulletin historique et philologique du Comite des travaux historiques et scientifiques* (Paris, 1891): 63–68, from Arch, de l'Yonne. H. 2211 (Supplement).

Fra Baptista de Orsini, et cetera, and we the convent, et cetera, to the venerable and religious master, our beloved Fra Bertrand de Cluix, prior of our priorv of France, greetings in the Lord, and to heed our commands.

We cannot without a grave sorrow in our heart describe the calamities and disasters hanging over us. Some time ago, the East thoroughly suffered painful and very terrible wounds when the most cruel prince of the Turks extended his rule over the territory and imperial city of great Constantine. And increasing in strength, he prepared a huge fleet and directed an army against the famous islands of Lemnos and Lesbos, which he captured after a short and irresistible battle. The harshest destruction was carried out there where so many crimes, such carnage, such cruelty could be seen. Yet it must not be considered less important that at the present time, the most cruel king of the Turks himself conceived of a shameful plan which he brought to bear against the Christian religion and eastern Christians. He previously kept his fleet within the Straits of the Hellespont Sea and was afraid for it to sail the Ionian, Aegean, and Carpathian Seas, or to annihilate the Cyclades Islands, because he was afraid of getting militarily involved with Christian forces. Indeed, hungering after past victories, he had a great fleet built on the shores of Gallipoli for some months before this. Gathering a huge amount of naval stores and protected by a large force of marines, he left the Hellespont and, sailing the Aegean under full sail, he attacked Euboea (Negroponte), a very famous island near the Continent.

There he had wooden bridges built there with marvelous skill to provide easy access to the island for his fellow soldiers. He also constructed engines and different types of artillery with which he could destroy the walls of the city of Negroponte, setting these up behind palisades opposite the walls. Before he ordered an attack on the city by force of arms, he decided to test the courage of the islanders to see if they wanted to subject themselves to surrender. And thus the citizens of this distinguished city and those who had

sworn on oath and were stationed as a garrison prepared to fortify and defend the city with exquisite measures of fortification. The most cruel enemy frightened off the parapets those who were not defended by the orthodox faith but were unable to devise a plan for separating the Christians from their determination nor was the momentum of their constant attacks and assaults able to scatter these strong men. The Turks attacked and advanced on the city of Negroponte with a very strong force. There were no lack of stipendiaries rushing to climb up the walls. The most experienced aduce instruitur, artes fabricat ut dicioni sue urbem subiciat, impavidi cives, signo crucis Domini nostri Ihesu Christi firmati, vires viriliter opponunt.

Non parcitur intra urbem ulli sexui, ulli ve etati; cuncti operi ac tuicioni se accingunt, quamvis erebris machinarum ictibus, Turci muros civitatis concuciatis, assiduis quoque aggressibus cives adoriantur, ut nec quies, nec locus respirandi daretur.

Tamen non desunt oppidani qui in viriliter resistant, pugnatum est quousque Turci machinis muros urbis qui mare adiacent, magna ex parte diruissent, ut magnus hiatus civitatis pro aditu pateret. Nituntur, ea in loco, civies vires opponere, et presidiis opportunis subvenire.

Turci illuc toto impetu, conflicunt, ingredique conantur. Nec fuissent certe Turci victores, nisi repens intestinum bellum exortum esset. Pugnantibus autem inimicis, quidam gregarii milites, qui publico stipendio obnoxii, huic loco presidio erant, Sathane alumni, immemoresque divine salutis, a tergo cives aggrediuntur. Fit cedes a Turcis; proditores intra urbem cunctos trucidant. Sic in ancipiti civitas posita, miserabiliter expugnantur, jugulantur cives; puberes interimuntur; virgines, vidue, matrone ad stuprum rapiuntur; juvenes fidem abnegant, matrimonia promiscua cum Turcis celebrantur, que partus ritibus machometicis imbuendos edant et pariant. Infinita que plebes insule in servitutis jugum redigitur, pars quoque insulanorum que jugo voluntario subici noluit, perimitur. Ubique cedes, ubique rapine, ubiqe stupra, ubique sanctarum reliquiarum polluciones. Nullus locus, nullus aditus, nullus conspectus a crudelitate et immanitate vacuus est. Omnia sunt oppleta pollucionibus, omnia scleritate sedata.

Quis talia fando temperet a lacrimis? Amissa esc urbs inclita, amissa est insula celeberrima, amissus est portus omni classi fidus et aptissitnus. Potitur Turcus hoc receptaculo et portus asilo tutissimo, ubi classis eius potentissima hyemare et vires sumere in dies propter. Tumescens inimicus tali tantaque victoria, et nullos conatus christianorum pertimescens, classem ipsam impune vagari in Egeo pelago jussit, quo effectum est ut minus terror cunctas insulas incesserit. Contremit totque Oriens: pavent insule Ciclade; jam spes non relinquitur. Deseruntur ab incolis Andros que jam suo imperio cessit, nivea que Paros et bachica Naxos. Non sunt sine magnis anxietatibus atque periculis,

masticea Chyos, Creta, Rodus, Cyprus et insule adjacentes. Choos, Lerro, Calamos ignorant quid agere debeant, insulam, exemplum tante victorie et of their troops as stationed by their commander devised means for putting the city under his control, but the undaunted citizens, confirmed by the sign of the Cross of Jesus Christ, courageously opposed the Turkish forces.

Within the city, no one of any sex or age was spared. All prepared themselves to work and defend, even though the Turks, shaking the walls of the city with clustered artillery barrages, unleashed such constant attacks on the citizens that no quiet or opportunity for rest was given them.

Nevertheless, the inhabitants, who resisted vigorously, were not found wanting. The battle raged until the Turkish artillery, at the city walls that were adjacent to the sea, had destroyed such a large section of it that they could enter the city through the big breach. The men of the city opposed them, they struggled in that place, and the reserve garrison came to assist.

The Turks with great dispatch continued attempting to enter at that point [of the breach]. And the Turks would certainly not have been victors had internal strife not unexpectedly broken out [among the Christians]. For while fighting with the enemy, certain common soldiers subject to public service, who were the garrison in this place (deceived by Satan and unmindful of divine salvation) attacked the citizens from the rear. Once the city surrendered to the Turks, all the traitors inside were slaughtered. Thus the city was placed in jeopardy, the citizens were overcome and miserably butchered. Children were slaughtered; virgins, widows to their disgrace were raped. Youths denied the faith and promiscuous unions were celebrated with the Turks from which children instructed in Muslim rites were conceived and born. Nearly all the poor on the island were reduced to the yoke of slavery. The islanders who did not subject themselves voluntarily to this yoke were annihilated. Slaughter, plunder, rape, and the defilement of the holy places was everywhere. No place, entrance, or view was devoid of cruelty and savagery.

Who can keep himself from tears in talking of such great things? This distinguished city was lost; this most famous city was lost; this harbor, a very suitable anchorage for an entire fleet was lost. The Turk took possession of this refuge and harbor with a very safe asylum where he could winter his extremely powerful fleet and could land forces in the same spot. Puffed up with so many triumphs and such a great victory and fearing none of the measures of the Christians, the Turk ordered his fleet to sail with impunity across the Aegean main. This was done so that wondrous terror would increase on all the islands. All of the East trembled; the Cyclades Islands shook with fear; already no hope was left. Andros, along with snowy-white Paros and Naxos of Bacchus, was each abandoned by its inhabitants who had already withdrawn from its rule. Mastic-laden Chios, Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus, and the

adjacent islands were not without great anxieties and dangers. Chios, Lerros, and Calamos ignored what they should have done. They focused, instead, on the island [of Negroponte] and the crudelitatem cernentum, cum civitas munitissima Venetorum imperio subdita, et tanto venete classis firmata prosidio, acrioribus iuribus oppugnata et tam crudelite expugnata sit.

Quid igitur de ceteris futurum sit, facile coniectari potest, nisi tetram mentem nephandus hostis alio convertat. His gravissimis vulneribus perculsi, incertum nobis est quid agere, quove confugere debeamus, nisi divino implorato auxilio, nos ad tantas vires excipiendas parare munimus. Itaque dies noctesque, hanc Rodiam civitatem, et nos tuicioni paramus, vestrum presidium, vestrum auxilium, vestrum favorem aperientes.

Adduntur preterea his nostris terroribus, penurie et cunctorum rerum in opie, agrorum sterilitas, fructuum tenuitas, commilitonum paucitas, cris alieni obligaciones, et rerum omnium necesitas. Non hec fingimus que exprimimus, vera sunt hec, et vera iam pridem aliis nostris litteris presignificavimus. Videti itaque fratres carissimi, quibus inpericulis angustiis, anxietatibus, jacturis et penuriis, constituti sumus. Concipere quoque potestis vestro perspicaci ingenio, maiora esse facta quam dicta. Vellemus audiretis clamores, ejulatus et populi nostri vociferaciones, qui, vestrum presidium, auxilium ac subvencionem, tanto terrore civitatis expugnacionis perculsus, implorat.

Hie siquidem populus christianus nostre fidei commissus est; reddituri sumus de eo coram judice et eterno creatore, racionem.

In salute Rodie urbis tocius ordinis nostri salus et quies versatur. Videte cur cruce signati estis! Videte quid professi sitis! Videte cur cruce signata sitem; videte quid professi sitem videte fratres carissimi, quid Deo vovistis! Accelerate gressus vestros, et nobis omni firmo presidio succurrite, atque subvenite! Non vos detineant domestice voluptates. Non distrahant a sancto proposito tecta delicata; sed tamquam veri Christi athlete ad tuicionem Rodie civitatis, ad conservacionem ordinis nostri, qui vos aluit, nutrivit, et ad honores provexit, ad consolacionem populi nobis commissi quantocius accredite.

Si nosmet rebus nostris atque statui universi ordinis non consulimus, qui subveniunt, certo non erit. Compulsi itaque his tantis; malis ut debite tuicioni nostre provideamus, in principia generale mandatum facere decrevimus et fratres nostros quos armis aptos cognovimus, ad nos vocare statuimus. Ea propter, serie presencium invicem maturo et deliberato consilio, vos prefatum venerabilem priorem, ac ceteros preceptores et fratres, in calce huiusmodi nostrarum literarum, nominatos, et unumquemque eorumdem, monemus, ortamur, et si opus sit, in vim vere obediencie, ac sub pena damnate rebellionis, privationis habitus, beneficiorum quoque et officorum, per vos et eos in nostra religione, habitorum et habendorum, vobis et eis iniungimus, preceipimus et mandamus, ut, visis presentibus, omni dilacione, excusacione et contradicione

cessante, vos prefatus prior, ac infrascripti preceptores et fratres, examples of such a great victory and cruelty since such a greatly fortified city subject to Venetian rule and bolstered by the protection of such a great Venetian fleet was overrun by fiercer troops and sacked with such cruelty.

One could easily surmise what the future might bring if the shameful enemy would make known his foul plans to another person. Beaten down by these very serious wounds, we are uncertain what to do or what we must order unless, in begging for divine aid, we take measures in preparation to confront such great forces. Therefore day and night, we ready this city of Rhodes for defense, testing your protection, help, and favor.

Besides these terrors, there was added a lack of money and of all things, sterility of the fields, decline in crops as well as the pawning of property and need of all things among the knights. We are not making up what we describe to you. All of this is true and what we have previously informed you in other of our letters is also true. Witness therefore, dear brothers, that we are placed in such dangers, precarious situations, anxieties, disasters, and penury! You can understand with your keen intelligence that more has occurred than can be talked of. We wish you could hear the cries, laments, and shouts of our people who implore your protection, aid, and help and who are unnerved by such great terror concerning an attack on the city. Indeed, these Christian people are committed to our faith and we are about to render an accounting concerning this before the judge and eternal creator.

The safety and stability of our order is connected with the safety of the city of Rhodes. Understand why you are marked by the Cross! Understand what you have professed! Understand, most dear brothers, what you have vowed to God! Speed up your pace and come to our rescue and relieve us with every firm protection! May your private interests not detain you. May your own choices and decisions not draw you away from the sacred rule, but just as true athletes of Christ you must be committed with us to the protection of the city of Rhodes, to the safeguarding of our order that supports, nourishes, and advances you, and to the support of our people.

If we ourselves do not pay attention to our affairs and the condition of all our order, who is there who will certainly come to its aid? Motivated by such important things so we may carry out the duty of our protection, we have decreed that a general order be published and we have summoned to us our brothers who we know are qualified in the use of weapons. Therefore with the serious, mature, and full deliberation of those present, we advise, urge, and, if it should be necessary, direct, command, and order you, venerable prior, and each and every one of the preceptors and brothers named at the end of our letter, in the force of true obedience and under the penalty of condemnation for contumacy, deprivation of habit, benefices or offices held by you and those

in our order. Thus, once you see the present letter, ceasing all delay, excuse, and contradiction, you and each of the preceptors and brothers named below et quilibet eorumdem, preparetis et disponatis, taliter ut, cum primo passagio muniti, et armis, comitiva, commeatibus et rebus bello necessariis, Rhodum accedere personaliter debeatis, et debeant, atque omnino teneantur. Quod si aliqui tepidi, negligentes, aut contumaces, quod non credimus, in execucione huiusmodi nostrorum mandatorum fuerint, contra vos et eos procedemus, procedique faciemus, tanquam contra inobedientes et rebelles, mandatorumque nostrorum contemptores.

Et ut vos, prefatus prior, ac ceteri preceptores et fratres infranominati, quos in nostrum subsidium vocamus, liberius expensis itineris, subvenire valeant, vobis et eisdem vocatis, aut eorum cuilibiet per presentes plenariam auctoriatatem, facultatem et potestatem ad tres annos, pecuniis anticipatis, arrendandi et affictandi prioratum, cameras priorales ac preceptorias et beneficia, cum fructibus et redditibus, salvis tamen juribus dimidiarum annatarum nostri communis thesauri, et ceteris oneribus impositis et imponendis, eidem thesauro infallibiliter exsolvendis, damus, concedimus et donamus. Ordinamus autem quod fratres dicti nostri prioratus, tam preceptores quam ceteri, qui, vigore presencium citati et vocati non sunt, pro sua facultate, nostre tuicioni subveniant, pecunias aut alias res opportuans et necessarias contribuendo et clargiendo, ut onerum religionis nostre, immunis nullus aut expers evadat. nomina autem eorum quos una cum prefato venerabili priore, per presentes vocamus et citamus, sequuntur: Religiosi fratres David de Sarcus preceptoriarum Sancti Stephanie de Rayneuille, Johannes de borbon de bancourt, Johannes de chally de fieffes, Johannes de Buieum de hysous, Jacobus sarpe de troyes, Jacobus caillay de brabant, Petrus clouet de fontaines souls montdidier, Egidius de Franqueville desquemioys, Petrus clouet de nangis Nicolaus de bar de bertheville, Adam caudiot villedei de druchesm preceptores et Nicolaus lesbahy dicte domus cappellanus. In cuius rei testimonium Bulla nostra communis plumbea presentibus est appensa.

Datum Rhodi, in nostra conventu, die vicesima quinta mensis augusti, ab incarnacione m iiii$^{c}$ lxx.

should make preparations and arrangements. Thus, when the first passage, with weapons, a band of warriors, supplies, and things necessary for war is ready, you and they are bound and generally obliged to personally come to Rhodes. But if any of these should be lukewarm or negligent in carrying out our orders of this kind, we will take legal proceedings against you and them, and will take actions as against the disobedient and contumacious as well as those who spurn our commands.

And that you, the prior and the preceptors and brothers named below,

whom we have called to our aid should be willing to very generously contribute to the expenses of the journey summoned from you and any of them whatsoever. By the present letter, we give, concede, and grant full authority, means, and power for three years to lease and rent from the anticipated funds of the priory, priory houses, preceptories, and benefices with the revenues and rents except nevertheless for half of the rights to the annates of our common treasury and certain imposts imposed now or before which infallibly must be paid without fail into the same treasury. Moreover, we ordain that the brothers of our priory as well as the preceptors and others who by the authority of the present letter are called out and those who are not summoned aid our defense according to their ability by contributing and granting money and other suitable and necessary things so that no one free and uninvolved should evade the responsibilities of our order. Moreover, the names of those who, along with the aforesaid venerable prior, are as follows: the religious fraters David de Sarcus of the preceptory of St. Stephen de Rayneuille, Jean de Bourbon de Bancourt, Jean de Chally des Fieffes, Jean de Buleum de Hysous, Jacob Sarpe of Troyes, Jacob Caillay of Brabant, Pierre Clouet of Fontaine-sous-Montdidier, Gilles de Francqueville Desquemoys, Pierre Clouet de Nangis, Nicholas de Bar de Bertheville, Adam Gaoudiot Villedieu of Drêche, preceptors, and the chaplain of the house, Nicholas Lesbahy. In testimony of this thing, our common lead seal is affixed to the present letter.

Issued at Rhodes in our convent on the twenty-fifth day of the month of August in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord, 1470.

2. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson mobilizes the Priory of France to fight the Turks.* 21 November 1479, Rhodes. AOM 387, ft. 1r-6v

Frater Petrus daubusson dei gratia sacre domus hospitalis sancte Johannis Iherosolimitani magister humilis de pauperum Ihesu Christi custos et nos conventus rhodi domus eiusdem. Universis et singulis Religiosis dicte domus nostre fidei catholice militione ac tuitione dedicatis has nostras litteras inspecturas et intellicturas illibatam obedenciam perfectam caritatis et eternum premium optamus. Nova et inaudita venerandi fratres Reverendi iniqua condicio ac temporum qualitas nos urget aliqua concipere et aggredi que praeter consuetudinem esse restantur. Nos etiam qui ipsius in distractionibus versamur et agitamur oculisque conspicimus que uiri alii auribus percipiunt. Eramus profecti et experimur quantum immaneat periculum clades et iactura et quam propinquum sit excidium nisi vigilantitura et pro virili parte opitulantur qui velle sancti obediencie subministavit. Sint vestrum superioribus mensibus tutorati de odio inexorabile quod in nos et Rhodi urbem

turcorum tyranus concepit. Quosque apparatus facere proponebat et loca nostra invadare nonnullis ex nostris reliogiosis tunc delictis et nobis subueniant mandaverimus ac vos in nostrum subsidium vocaverimus hec tamen in presentia non sufficitur si rerum turbulentem statum consideremus sed maiora presidia imploranda atque adhibenda sunt ut ea cum honore et gloria conveneamus que a nostris predecessoribus tanto sudore et labore prompta videamus nuper namque nuntiorum et perfugarum qui ex turcis ad nos premiis allectandi fuerunt relationibus acceperimus turcorum tyranum nomine christiano infestissimam vero proxime futuro validissimo terrestre exercitu ac prepotenti classe munitum rhodiam urbem aggressure ne id quemadmodum nuncii affirmaverant per prefectos et capitaneos aggredi studet sed eius expeditionis directioni et regimini properam personam astabere deputareque deseruit. Promittat etiam sua presentia rerum quantumtocius confecturum et ut voti compos reddatur classem satis validam vellorum C. lxque bombardas et machinasque in bello usum esse solent equosque proelio equestri aptos devehunt quantumtocius parari iussit que prope dierum exitura est et nostra loca invasura cuiusque adventu arbitratur subsidia prohibere colonos et agricolas intercludere ne solite exterrenatur agriculture Reique frumentarii frustremus subversione. Videt inimicus se cum vicinis paccatum neminibusque prospicit suis conatibus vires obvecturas. Unde tanta inflatur superbia animique elatione ducit ut hyemis incommoditatem validasque tempestates non formidet atcjue nil sibi obfuturum

*2. Master Pierre d'Aubusson mobilizes the Priory of France to fight the Turks.* 21 November 1479, Rhodes. AOM 387, ft. 1r-6v

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson, by the grace of God, Master of the holy community of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem and custodian of the poor men of Jesus Christ and we, the convent of the same community of Rhodes. To each and every religious of our community dedicated to the aid and protection of the Catholic Faith. Once you see and understand our letter, we desire your full and perfect obedience and the eternal reward of almsgiving. Venerable Reverend Fathers, the novel and unheard-of evil condition and state of the times force us to begin and undertake some measures that remain beyond the limits of custom. Indeed, we, who are involved in and concerned with these critical matters, have seen with our eyes what other men have only heard about with their ears. We have undergone great danger, destruction, and devastation, that is coming ever closer, unless those who have to watch vigilantly and who bring aid on the part of the warriors should supply them according to the desires of holy obedience. In the past months, there are those of you who should have protected your Order from the inexorable hatred that the tyrant of the Turks

conceived against us and the city of Rhodes. He was planning to carry out these projects and to invade our territory when we ordered some of our best men to help us and also summoned you to our aid. It is not enough that we should consider the turbulent state of affairs, but that we must implore greater aid and bring it to bear so we may act in agreement with true honor and glory, just as we have witnessed our predecessors act with great exertion and labor. From the messengers and fugitives who we won over from the Turk with rewards, we have recently received reports that the tyrant of the Turks (so hostile to the name of Christ) is about to attack the fortified city of Rhodes with a very strong land army and an extremely powerful fleet. The messengers had not yet affirmed how he planned to attack through his officer and captains, but that he wished to assign and appoint a suitable person for the administration and command of his expedition. He also promised that he would carry out personally as many of these things as possible; and when the accounting of taxes was complete, he would fit out a strong fleet of one hundred and sixty ships, which would transport bombards and machines customarily used in war, as well as horses suitable for equestrian war, and in the near future he would set out to invade our lands. He planned to block aid and shut off the serfs and farmers upon his arrival, so agricultural products could not be exported as usual and we would be frustrated by the destruction of the grain supply. The enemy saw that he could not make an agreement with the inhabitants and foresaw that he would have to overthrow our forces by his own efforts. At this point, he was filled with such great arrogance, and was carried on by such an elation of spirit, that he did not fear the inconveniences and strong storms of winter and thought nothing would impede his demands to us for imposts and tribute. He putet. In nos quoque suis postulatas refragantes vectigal queque et tributum. Respuentes perfidiam mortem convertit. Ea spe ductus que solos indiscriminum incendio constitutes non magnis viribus munitos facile oppugnare poterit.

Sed non intelligit infidelis domini nostri Iesu Christi clementiam atque potentiam qui spectantes adhibitis perinvitis humanis auxiliis ne deum temptare videamus numquam defecit qui nec infastu nec in conmilitionum copia victoriam posint sed in vera et iusta causa. Cuius nulla maior et verior excogitari praeter fidei catholice tutela pro qua pugnamus pro qua sanguine fundimus pro qua corporalia et transitoria bona calcare non postponimus hoc frequenti rumore suasi colonos cum suppellectili agris desertis vineisque populatis ad oppida tuciora reduximus presidiaque disposuimus. Nosque ad tuitionem dies noctesque preparamus ut cum dei presidio in cuius virtute belligeramus de nephandis hostibus victoriam reportemus. Venerandi fratres ne putetis hec nos scribere levi de tarn impensi sunt quippe et alia clandestina que litteris nequaquam sunt commeranda nos ad id agendum monitariam

adhibere fidem verbis nostris ymmo rebus ipsis et periculo tradere. Certus profectus est qui discrimina non videt nobis etiam non placet religiosos nostras et commilitiones absque vigentissima causa vocare seu accire. Nos grandes impresas sine causa subimus sed ubi de ordinis nostri statu de fidei catholice tuitione de rhodie urbis confirmationem agitur nullum opus nullus labor nulli conatus renusandi sunt. Omnium quoque et vigentem provectus et omne suppellectile his in rebus exponere liberali animo tenemur si nostram professionem adimplere cupimus. Non deerunt qui dicerunt si vocati rhodum proficiscuntur qui priortatus qui bauiliatus qui preceptorias qui loca ordinis degent et administrabunt deseruntur etiam si ruina parientur ac preceptorum absenciamille incommoditates subibibunteis respondemusaliisheccognomina committi posse que si unus id agere possit non videtur currentes id adimplere non valeamus. Et ubi duo preponeruntur incommoda minus semper est eligendi. Contendimus de confirmatione preceptoriarum et tutela rhodie urbis statuque ordinis nostri inter que nulla parte esse coliatio que viii est partita ad verticem comparatio que porcionis ad totum nulla profecto cum pars interiit. caput sanum potest esse ymo pleraque membra abscinderentur ut tocius corporis compago salva sit capite truncatato totum corpus intereat necesse est hec patria sunt si etiam preceptorum absentia beneficiorum ruinam affert quod non est concedere. Nam committi possunt fidedignes regimina Catholicique principes non deruerunt qui prudens fidei catholice dicatis favorem seu killed those who rejected this perfidy. Moved by this hope, he indiscriminately set the ground ablaze so he could more easily attack those places that were not protected by great forces.

But the infidel did not understand the clemency and power of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, who perceiving that one never fails who bases victory not on arrogance or the number of troops, but on a true and just cause. Also, that we not should tempt God by summoning human aid so unnecessarily. There is no greater and truer cause to think of than the protection of the Catholic Faith, for which we fight; for which we spill our blood; and for which without hesitation we tread underfoot our corporeal and transitory goods. Prompted by numerous rumors, we convinced the farmers and conducted them from the exposed fields, vineyards, and settlements to the safer fortifications. Then we formed them into garrisons. Day and night, we are preparing for defense so that with the protection of God, in whose power we are waging war, we may achieve victory over our abominable enemies. Venerable fathers, you should not think we are writing in a trifling way about matters that are so momentous and about other secret things that have not yet been reported in our letters, but that we, in issuing this warning, are bringing to bear faith with our words as well as our deeds and telling of the danger. For those who have not seen the destruction, be certain that it does not please us to summon and call together

our clerics and fellow Knights without an extremely significant reason. We have not undertaken these great projects without reason, but when the condition of our Order, the protection of the Catholic Faith, and the strengthening of the city of Rhodes is involved, no work, no labor, and no effort should be refused. With a free spirit, we are bound to demonstrate every forceful advantage and supplication to fulfill our vow. Are they not derelict who say that, if summoned, they would set out to Rhodes, but who will occupy and administer the priories, bailiwicks, and preceptories if the places of the Order are deserted, and ruin is caused, and a thousand difficulties are brought about by the absence of the preceptors? We respond to them and to others united in this name, that if only one of us is able to do it, it does not seem fitting that all of us should not do it. And where two evils are put before us, the lesser must always be chosen. We are fighting for the strengthening of the preceptories, for the protection of the city of Rhodes, and for the good standing of our order, whose community in no place is divided into eight parts, even at the highest level. The comparison of the part to the whole sum is of no use when the parts are destroyed. Indeed, the head can be healthy after many of the members of the body have been cut off, so as a result the unity of the body is safe. Yet once the head is cut off, all of the body is destroyed. Thus, it is necessary that this principality remain, even if the absence of the preceptors causes the destruction of the benefices, and this will not be conceded. Indeed, the faithful can be entrusted with the supervision, and the Catholic princes, who are learned in the teachings of the Catholic faith, have ordered the favor and the presidium imperitaveruntur Christi quasque fideles honestum retinere a vobis subscriptum conspicientes manus porrigent adventuros quominus in neminibus detrimenta patriae. Dicent profectura nonulli quid agemus debiles senisque conferti ac pauperes quibus tenues facilitates adsunt quomodo hanc longarn peregrinationem aggredemur quomodo impensis subveniemus ac vera caritas et obediencia inviolata difficultatis non admittet debilium et senum consilium et in agendis.

Experienciam requirimus que non minus in bello quam gladis aptis gloriosumque ipsis erat hanc provinciam et profectionem suscipere in quam etiam si desereant non minus meritum quam cum gladiis structis pugnant assequuntur. Nec aliquis tam egenus est qui itineri pro sua qualitate sufficere non possit quod ut commodis fiat potestatem arrendandi concedimus. Admodum recte ille egressus est qui minus habet que sibi promissum estabilire ordini et tamen cum ipsis pollicitis ordini patrie religioni obedire superioribus tolla submittere venit iuraverit et promisit. Non est itaque quispiam aut senem aut pauperem qui se a profectione excusare licite possit sed si huiusmodi excusatio adempta est. Quomodo iuvenes robusti corpore dimittere mandata nostra respiciunt aut reicere qua fronte poterunt. Igitur fratres in christo

dilectissimi quos nominatum ad hoc creditum prestantissimum delegimus et vocamus alioque in calce harum litterarum nominamus ortamur ut pro vestra caritate zeloque ardentissimo quem in ordinem ipsum et fidem catholica gratis alacri animo hanc profectionem ultra marinam suscipiatis nec vanas et hirsutas excusationes adducatis sed prompto animo agite quod a vobis requiritur postulatur immugitur. Ingens est periculum grandes moles grandis necessitas grave pondus et sarcina ad quam sustinendam plurimum humerii necessarii existunt. Non suificimus quam presentates nec sumus sed vestra presentia requiritur que utinam sufficiat. Non etiam animo deficimus sed constanti et forti mente prestamus de celesti miracula specantes qui saepe nuncium concessit pantis ipsam tollentibus prepotentis et feroces inimicos propulsare atque vincere. Cuiusque rei exemplo sunt plurima que in presente tempore coartati reticemus spem quoque habemus in sanctissimo domino nostra sancta quoque ecclesia catholica cuius porcio sumus. Ac serrenissimis catholicisque regibus et principibus qui non dubitamus orthodoxe fidei intuitu auxilia prestabunt et concedant afflictis et oppressis. Nec perire sutnent que maiores ac sui prodecessores sanctissima mente instituerint. Sed quomodo ab his presidia implorabimus aut obtinebimus si religiosi nostri si qui voto obedientie astricti sunt mandatos non parentes auxilia denegabunt. Quomodo ab alio queris quod prestare non intendis sapientum sumptam est. protection of Christ. The princes also ordered that those faithful maintain the honors written below by you; and that they should protect those extending their hands for help so that no one in the Fatherland will suffer damage. Some prefects proclaim how we are inciting the weak, the old, and the poor, who are so full of grief, to be ready with their scant resources so that with this outlay of money we might all take part in this long journey, and so the true love and inviolate obedience should not admit the counsel of the weak and aged in carrying out these things.

We demand no more experience in war than a willing sword. Those bearing such have shown this duty and campaign to be glorious. Even if they fall short, they would deserve no less than those who come after them so they might fight with drawn swords. Nor is anyone so needy that he is not able to provide for the journey from his own holdings, because we have granted the right to remittances as fitting to the circumstances. Surely, he sets out rightly who has to establish to the Order less than what was promised to him but nevertheless he came, swore, and promised to obey these pledges to the rule of the Order, and to submit to orders from superiors. Thus there is not one, no matter how old or poor, who can justifiably excuse himself from the expedition unless he has obtained an excuse of this type. How can youths who are sound of body disrespect and reject our commands with such arrogance? Therefore, most beloved brothers in Christ, we have selected and named at the bottom of

another one of these letters those who are most eligible for this trust. We have named and listed so that on behalf of your most ardent love and zeal to this order and to the Catholic faith you should undertake this expedition for service across the sea freely and with ready spirit; and so you should make neither vain nor uncultivated excuses, but with a eager spirit should do what is required, demanded, and bellowed out to you. There is massive peril; great obstructions, great expense, and heavy burdens that require numerous arms to restrain them. We alone are not powerful enough, but your presence is needed and would that it may be sufficient! We are not lacking in courage, but rather we are supplied with a constant and strong mind in observing celestial signs which, after the meaning is interpreted, often provide a message that shows how to drive off and defeat extremely powerful and fierce enemies. We pass over in silence the great number of examples of this limited to the present time; we have hope in our most holy Lord and in the Holy Catholic Church, of which we are a member. And we also have hope in the most serene Catholic kings and princes whom we do not doubt will provide help for the orthodox faith and will aid the afflicted and oppressed. Nor should they undertake to ruin what their ancestors and predecessors established with the most holy intention. But how will we implore or obtain protection from these men if our monks who are bound by a vow of obedience to our order will deny help in carrying out our commands? How are you to ask from another something that you have obtained from the ancients and that you do not wish to hand over? Nichil petes quod negaturus fuisti. Nichil negabis quod petiturus fuisti. Si rego nos ipsi religiosi viris corpus pecuniam subtanciam tuicioni status ordinis nostri prestare recusaturus. Quomodo ab aliis presidia subventiones gracias et auxilia equa satiate petere querere aut affragitare possimus. Reddite quoque obequium deo et domino nostro Ihesu christo. Reddite obedientiam ordinii qui vos aluit educavit et ad honores prourget. Reddite votam vestrum et personam deo semel consecratum et divino obsequio astrictam paratam et promptam sarciniis religionis nostre tradite. Id exigit iniqua temporum condicio id requirat inaudita difficultas id postulat gravissima rerum qualitas quam nostri maiores et prodecessores nulla undique tempora preceperunt regnoverunt aut habuerunt. Oriuntur que et eftunduntur assiduo iniquiores et immerensores.

Nec dubitamus post has nostras destinatas litteras ut urgentur gravissima que significare non poterimus reartarti temporis brevitate et aliis nuntiis impliciti. Nec etiam tunc essent opportune littere propter itinerum longi quitatem cum in hoc anno instanti inimicum prestolentur et haud dubere expectemus quare ut eius aditum proveniatis necessarium. Itaque fratres dilectissimi accelerate gressos vestros et ad profectionem disponite his que litteris nostris habentis personaliter rhodum accedite cum armis et comitiua sufficienti et quatenus vos verissimos sacre obediencie filios agnoscamus ut

non sit necesse commeatibus et perceptis vestris tamen ut augeatur peccunium quod obediencia per stabilius reddere dignoscitur et ne quispiam pignor efficiatur et languidior. Serenorum Principium cum matura deliberatione nostri venerabili consilii complici alia mandata renovantes et confirmantes vos et quemlibet vestrum in calce huius modi literarum nostrarum nuncupatos monemus optamus et si opus sit in vimvere obedientie sub pena dampnate rebellionis ac privationis habitus prioratorum bauiliarum preceptoriarum et beneficiorum habitorum et habendarum quam eripere non obediendo intuitu confratationis fundimus percipimus et mandamus quatenus omnem excusatationem exceptionem et contradictionem recessantem. Visis punctilibus ad profectionem ultra mariniam disponatis et rhodum personaliter accedite in subsidium ordinis nostri. Talem que per totum mensem martii proxime futuri aut cicius hie rhodi adesse debeatis etteneatis sub penis superius declaratis. Et autem aliqui tardent hoc nostrum mandatum comparem et verisimilem ad tempus prefixum accedere non possent his tamen iniungimus ut sub penis predictis quatenus omni dilatione cessante his comptis profectionum suscipiatis et rhodum personaliter accedatis quod si facere renuatis preteritu termino quo ipsum iter confecisse potuissent corpore contra vos procedamus tanquam contra inobedientes et rebelles rnandatorumque You seek nothing that has been denied to you. You will deny nothing which you were about to seek. If, of course, the men of this Order were to refuse to grant us the substantial fund of money for the protection of the good estate of our Order, how can we seek, look for, or earnestly demand from others subventions, grants, and aids for protection in equal amounts? Also, submit to our God and Lord Jesus Christ. Give back obedience to the order that has raised and educated you and greatly motivates you to honor. Complete your vow and return your person once consecrated to God and bound, prepare, and made ready for divine submission to the burdens of our Order. The evil state of the times requires it; the unheard of difficulty demands it; the serious quality of matters is one that our ancestors and predecessors at no time ever knew, recognized, or considered; and that the evil and guilty have brought about and caused.

We have no doubt that after this letter has been sent that we will not need to explain the extremely serious measures that are called for, since we were bound by the short span of time and were tied up with other messages. Also, our letters then were not accurate regarding the length of the journey and since we did not expect the enemy this year, we hardly expected that you would have to take necessary measures concerning his arrival. Therefore, most beloved brothers, speed your steps to the expedition, make the arrangements discussed in our letter, and personally come to Rhodes with sufficient weapons and troops. So we shall recognize you as sons most true to holy obedience;

nevertheless, it should not be necessary that your compensation for the trips and supplies be increased since those who carry out the obedience with extreme steadfastness are distinguished from anyone who acts more unwillingly and sluggishly. With the mature deliberation of the Serene Princes and of our venerable council, we advise you and any of your men named at the bottom of our letter who are unwilling that our plans are renewed and our orders confirmed. We establish, rule, and command that, if it is necessary in the force of true obedience and under the penalty of condemnation for insubordination and deprivation of habit, you shall be exiled from the priories, bailiwicks, preceptories, and deprived of benefices, habits, and allowances for not obeying the judgment of the confraternity, and every excuse, exception, and contradiction shall be denied. Once you have seen these orders, you should make arrangements for the expedition across the sea and personally come to Rhodes in support of our order. Likewise, you must very quickly arrive here at Rhodes throughout all the month of next March and you are bound under the above-proclaimed penalties. Moreover, if anyone delays in carrying out this command of ours or similar ones and cannot arrive by the aforesaid time, we still order in accordance with the said penalties and to stop all delay that, once you receive this letter, you undertake this expedition and personally come to Rhodes. But if you refuse to make the journey, which the others had been able to fulfill as a body, once the time-limit has passed, we shall proceed against you just as against disobedient and rebellious persons who are contemptuous meorum contemptens. Insuper ut cominodius expensi itineris subvenere possintur tenore premiis infrascriptis vocatis et irritatis per nos auctoritatem facultatem et licenciam concedimus arrendandi effictandi prioratus bauillias preceptorias ac domos personis sibi beneficis ad tres anos incipientes a die prima Aprilius arrendandi pecuniis anticipatis premiisque arrendandii recipienti ac de precio recepto acredatorem quietandi. Salvis iuribus nostri communis thesauri impositis et imponedis. Quod quid arrendantur cum contra dicta obitu quod absit arrendancium aut permutationem eorum ad alia beneficia intererunt valorem et robur obtinere volumus atque desiderimus. Tale vigor in premissi vos exhibeatis et de vestra valeatis apud nos obediencia conmendari. Nomina vocatorum sunt habet videlicet

[list of names omitted from ff. 2b-6a]

of my commands. Likewise, so the expenses may be defrayed more easily, as we have assigned or executed in the below-written donations, we grant through us the authority, right, and freedom of leasing and renting priories, bailiwicks, preceptories, houses with benefices tied to them and to individuals.

These will commence on the first day of April for three years in leasing the anticipated money, in receiving rewards, and in paying off the principal from the received money, except for the rights of our common treasury that are currently imposed and to be imposed. We wish to remain in effect and valid whatever is leased in connection with the said expedition and whatever remains from the said lease or its exchange that concerns other benefices. May you display such validity in the aforesaid and may you wish to have your obedience commended before us. The following are the names of those summoned:

[List of names omitted]

3. *Pierre d'Aubusson mobilizes the priories of France, St. Gilles, Auvergne, Aquitaine, Tolouse and Campania to go to war against the Turks.*

24 July 1479, Rhodes.
ADM 387, ff. 6b-8b

Mandatum prioratum pro guerra (space) pro francia sancti egidii alvernie aquitaine tholose et campanie

Frater Petrus daubusson etc. Et nos conventus etc. Universis et singulis presentes nostras litteras visuras audituras et lecturas salutem in domino sempiternam necessarium non videtur hoste victoriis potenciam et magnitudinem in presentiam repetere cum iam toti orbi incogitationes sint et ea saepius litteris et nunciis. v. [ir] f.[idelissimus] significavimus. Libet igitur preterire quot inclita regna quot illustria imperia quot nobiles viles forcia castella preclaras insulas grandes diciones et loca subegerit. Nec dicimus quale crudelitatis et animi furore in sacras (a)edes ecclesias monasteria aliquas que s(a)evierit qualiter sanctorum devotissimas reliquias po(l)luerit et prostraverit reticemus quot almas virgines ac pudicissimas matronas ad stuprum turpissimum compulerit quotque suo iussu adolescentes et iuvenes caractara baptismate insigniti catholicam fidem abnegaverint t(y)rannus preterea quot et quantas iacturas ruinas calumnas et detrimenta nominis christiane attulent horrescimus profecto hie pauca pro pluribus referentes. Quis talia fraude temperet a lacrimis. Vulnera quidem christianus mota gravia sunt et letalia nisi nutu divino catholici fortitudinis scutum viriliter accipere festinent de decusque prodignae humanae non constituere que fidei catholice que nomine christiano que animarum saluti quantocius succurrantur. Etiam preteritis victoriis annos quinque et viginti exactos ab hoste presidissimo patria eius aucta est et restat admodum potencia spuricissimorum, namque progenitorum suorum ab Othomannorum excruenda familia orginem diuturnum deflenda

facilestat nichiique sibi grande atque difficile assumat, hec etiam non parvum insoletem hostis animum ad queque grandia subeunda impeilunt. Hoc unum vere quod subicimus ardencius suadet cum se videat cum vicinis rebus composite et pacate hanc qualitatem nactum esse atque temporis oportunitatem adeptum ut in eos vires suas dirigat quos maximo inexorabilique odio prosequitur in nos videlicet civitates castella insulas et loca que sue dicioni contigua et vicina haberunt que tot animos turbulente tempestate

3. *Pierre d'Aubusson mobilizes the priories of France, St. Gilles, Auvergne, Aquitaine, Toulouse and Campania to go to war against the Turks.*

24 July 1479, Rhodes.
ADM 387, ff. 6b-8b

Command sent concerning the war to the priories of France, St. Gilles, Auvergne, Aquitaine, Toulouse, and Campania

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson etc. And we the convent etc. To each and everyone who is about to see, hear, and read our present letter. Eternal salutations in the Lord. It does not seem necessary to discuss once more in the present letter the power and extent of the enemy victories, since there were public announcements everywhere and we have proclaimed them frequently to the most faithful men through letters and messengers. Therefore, let us not mention how many distinguished realms, illustrious empires, noble villages, fortresses, and castles, famous islands, great authorities and places the tyrant has conquered. Nor are we going to talk about how with such great cruelty and fury of spirit he savaged some of the holy sanctuaries, churches, and monasteries; or how he polluted and destroyed the most holy relics of the saints. We shall remain silent about how many extremely modest maidens, virgins, and matrons he drove into the most shameful disgrace and how many adolescents and youths marked with the sign of baptism he ordered compelled to deny the Catholic Faith. Although we shudder at the great number and extent of surrenders, destruction, violent outrages, and injuries that have been caused to the Christian name, there is little advantage in referring to more cases of this sort. Who with such great deceit can keep himself from tears. Indeed, except by divine command, what Christian would not be moved by such grave and lethal wounds to immediately and courageously take up the shield of the Catholic Faith, not to establish a very worthy glory as quickly as possible, but so they might come to the aid of the Catholic Faith, the name of Christ, and the salvation of souls. Also, after twenty-five years of gaining past victories from an enemy very much on the defensive, the Turks s homeland

has increased, and his power still remains. Indeed, the murderous family originating from the progeny of Othman might have easily fallen back on its ancient origin and undertaken nothing great and difficult for itself. Yet this spurred the great insolent spirit of the enemy to undertake great things. In truth, what we have undergone has persuaded the Turk very ardently, since it seemed good to he who has reconciled and settled matters in neighboring areas, to surrender to this mood and take the opportunity of the moment so he might direct his energies towards these matters. With immense and inexorable hatred, he unleashed his actions against us; that is, against the cities, castles, islands, and places that were contiguous and neighbored his realm. We, supported by the Almighty with an ardent spirit, have protected so many souls unfitted to the turbulent atmosphere et gravissimo bellos incongruentes forti animo favente altissimo tutati fuimus et ne quid diconis nostre portiam aulam subieceret nec ad vectigal censum aut tributum subeundem eiusdem nos conpulerit quinymo sue classes et exercitus qui loca nostra aggressi sunt non parvam iacturam cladem et stragem exportaverunt et a nostris classibus et triremibus damna frequencius acceperuntur.

Nota est itaque turcorum principis potencia non margarita est quanta si commoditas nos ignorantius oblata est per res et negocia pro voluntatis arbitrio cum viciniscoinposuerit non aut vigetur aut impeditur ab aliquo quiete quidem et elacione tumidus solet. Sedet regis iniquus gladius heu grandes fortias dumtaxat in eos fabricat et machinatur quos spem eius iunglulare captivos videlicet que semper constante anima resistimus et adversus quod nephandi imperii fasces exercere non potuit non meritam dicionis possessionem sitit que decus et honorem impositi censi quesiti quod a nobis petitum reiecerimus et eius nunciis repulsam dedimus absint ab ordine nostro tam nephancius facimus spem tam firmam in christo ihesu cuius triumphalem signum pectore gestamus reponimus non per impedimenta commilitonium nostrorum vires et subsidia imploramusque ad hec fortiter defendenda Sanctissimi domini nostri et catholicorum regorum principumque presidia que in causis fidei nullo umqua tempore denegantur. Nec vobis non ambigimus denegata autem que soli in belli feroce atque incendio permachinamus. Si vobis tamen commilitonibusque nostris prediis ac beneficiis que tuicioni fidei dicata sunt vires et auxilia prius petenda sunt ut si quod possimus agimus ceteri ad subsidia prestanda impellantur. Nam ut tante potencie resistamus maiores quidem potentates quod nunc requirantur erimus enim in conspectu salvatoris nostri et dei omnipotentis ac chrsitiani orbis excusati culpaque vacui si quod vires nostre suppeditaverunt huic tam plure operi effuderimus. Hec igitur et permuita que rerum experienciam et difficuitatem presenciam nos edocunt que silencio preterire que letteris promulgata sacris est cum his affueritur nec ea vobis ignota erunt. Nos suadent et impellunt ut vestros et

preceptores in conclusione harum nostrarum nuncupationes in auxilium nostrum ymo liberaliter […] et cause vestre tutoris genitricisque et nutricis nostre dive religionis Militiarum presidii que nos et vos alunt nutruunt edocunt et ad honores liberaliter provexit appellemus et vocamus adest profecto tempore quod ipsa ordine nobis et vobis gloriam prejuvat et premium eterne salutis afFerat decrevit tamen hostem omnem ex parte terre marique tonnentorum que machinorum vere proximo hoc urbes et loca nostra aggredi invadere et oppugnare cuius quid destinatum propositum pluribus indiciis et signis significavit potissimum eius rei argumentum dedit que cum reliquis vicinis res pacare studuerit ut nos relictos et solos aggrediatur nec sibi quidquem molestius of tremendous wars, so he may not subjugate the port of our domain, or compel us to submit to a tax, import or tribute to him. His fleets and army attacked our holdings and wreaked immense destruction, ruin, and slaughter; but very frequently our fleets and triremes inflicted damage upon them.

It was thus understood that the power of the prince of the Turks is not such a great pearl if it does not know of the advantages offered us by these circumstances as well as the undertakings carried out for the sake of good will with neighbors. It does not flourish, it does not make or prevent peace, it is customarily puffed up with conceit. Alas, the evil sword of the king remains fixed on the great fortresses while it fashions and contrives its intent to slaughter all the captives in them. With a constant spirit, we have always resisted against this since he who cannot exercise the authority of a nefarious empire does not maintain the worthy possession of this authority. We have rejected the glory and honor of his imposts, taxes, and tributes and drove off his envoys who came so nefariously before our Order. We exercise such a firm hope in Jesus Christ that we wear his triumphal sign on our chests and are not put off by difficulties. To strongly defend this hope, we implore the forces and aid of our fellow knights, the protection of our most holy Lord, and of the Catholic kings and princes, and the protection that in matters of the faith at no time should be denied. Moreover, we do not hesitate to deny to you that we alone should be engaged in this fierce war and conflagration. If nevertheless forces and aid were previously sought from you, our fellow knights, who from your estates and benefices are dedicated to the defense of the faith, then if we do what we are able, others should be induced to give aid. Indeed, even greater forces should now be required so we may resist against such great power. For in the sight of our Saviour, and Almighty God, and the Christian world, we would be free of excuse and blame only if our men should supply many works. Therefore, experience and this present difficulty has taught us many things; either pass over in silence or promulgate letters. It is sacred that you provide aid and you do not know it. These persuade and impel us that your men and

preceptors named at the end of these documents should freely come to our aid and for the sake of the protection of your Creator and for the defense of our foster-mother, the divine Order of the Knights which has raised, nourished, and reared both us and you. We appeal and summon for that which freely carries us ahead to honors. Since the suitable time is near, we have appealed and summoned so that it helps in anticipation the glory of this Order, for us and you, and conveys the reward of eternal salvation. Nevertheless the Turk ordered all the host to attack, invade, and assault by land and sea with guns and machines set up near us, our cities, and places. He communicated the plan he had decided on with many signs and signals and gave very powerful proof of this campaign when he wanted to settle matters with other neighbors so he might attack us alone and deserted. He also did this so it would not prove too troublesome for afferri propterquam Rhodiorum homines et de eis scimus quorum et proximus et negocia prospera sperunt et refutant nisi ommisionem censure attulerint et pollicentur quod ubi denegatum a nobis videt quod a plurimis obtinet tanta quid furia debachannia ut animi cum immensam crudelitatem contineri non valeat unde verba mendaces profecit nec cessat in nos machamentum ut prepositum optamus consequi volamus.

Que cum ita sunt fratres dilectissimi vos priores, preceptores et fratres et quemlibet vestrum in talem presentiam descriptos zelo et religionis fervore monemus oramus et si opus sit in vim vere obedientie sub pena privacionis habitus beneficiorum quorumque et officiorum per vos in nostram religionem habitore et habendorum quam eo ipso nostris iussionibus contrafaciendo inerrante consectantur distrixerunt. iniugimus et mandamus quatenus visis punctibus et his nostris mandatis intimatis ad profectiones ultramarinas vos omni diligencia cura et studio faciatis rhodiamque accediatis taliter que per totam mensem Aprilis proxime futuri anni M iiii octagesimum adesse personaliter infallibiliter debeatis et sub penis predictis teneamini quod si efficere neglexerintur aut timore perfixe non affueritis quod non concedimus contra vos et quemlibet vestram qui non posuerit procedimus procedique facimus tanquam contra inobedientes et rebellantes mandatorum que nostrorum contemptores secundum formam stabilimentorum ordinis nostri. Non enim arbitramur necesse fore tam severa pena in vos animadvertere cum zelus obediencie sanctissime id vos igitur suadebit et compellat satis quanto auxilia dedecore et consilio oneri atque autem detrimento esset si auxilia si presidia si vires in tucionem urbis Rhodie castellorum et locorum nostrorum afferre non studueritur sine quibus hoc in orbe vivere generosos animos non licet si etiam promissio vite eterne ad id peragenda vos non impelleret honos tamen fama mundane glorie id efficere cogeret que semper illustres animos ad gravissima quaque perveria subeunda coegit. Quarum rerum permulta sunt exempla et domestica et peregrina tam latina quam greca inter quos utrosque

gentes qui animi generositate vigueruntur sola quid populari curam ducti in maximas clades adducti sunt. Vos igitur nobili loco nati catholica caractara insigniti religiosoque vinculo ac jurisprudente adacti pericula vel communem ipsam gloriosam veritatem formidabitis que non solum curam popularem et honorem famam quinimo eternam beatudinem periuvit dat atque confert.

Scimus vos generosi esse catholicamque fidem observare ordinisque professionem toto corde diligere et amare. quare non dubitamus vocacione superiore inducti his nostris mandatis vos effectualiter parituros et ut vere obediencie filios obsecuturos. Cum enim contumaci fuerint penas ante notatas licet nec sine constancie onere atque saecule pergrate et nominis infamia insidiatam vitam culpe constans ducet. him to violently deal with the men of Rhodes. We know from them that they hope for and do not reject the current and prosperous undertakings unless they cause a miscarriage of justice. They promise that when we seemed to deny this, it would cause such a raving madness that, when their spirits could not contain the immense cruelty which produced lying words, the treachery against us will not cease nor will this command be carried out as we wished and desired it.

Beloved brothers, since there are thus among you priors and preceptors, whether brothers or whomever of your men listed in such an instrument, we warn and entreat with the zeal and fervor of our order, that, if it should be necessary in the force of true obedience, you should punish those who act against these orders of ours according to the penalty of deprivation of habit, benefices, and whatever office is held in our order along with its habit and allowances. We order and command that on seeing these articles and understanding our orders you, with all diligence, care, and energy, should undertake expeditions across the sea and come to Rhodes for all of the month of next April in the upcoming year of 1480. You must personally and infallibly come and are bound under the aforesaid penalties. If these are not carried out, or, if you, transfixed with fear, are not present and we have not granted permission for this, we will take legal actions against you and any of your men who were not stationed. We shall legally proceed just as against those who are disobedient, rebellious, and contemptuous of our commands according to the letter of the ordinances of our Order. Indeed, we do not think that such a severe penalty should be necessary to attend to you since the zeal of the most holy obedience will move and compel you when there is enough help, grace, and counsel for such a great burden and damage. But if vassals, garrisons, and forces should not be eager to carry out the protection of the city of Rhodes, our castles, and places, no noble spirits could live in the world. If the promise of eternal life did not drive you to fulfill this, how can honor, fame, and worldly glory force you to accomplish what had impelled illustrious spirits to endure such grave atrocities. There are very many examples of these things-both

domestic and foreign, Latin and Greek. Among these, people of both types, led only by the breath of popular concern, who have flourished with nobility of spirit, have been brought to the greatest destruction. Therefore, born to a noble rank, marked with the sign of the cross, and compelled by this religious and judicial bond, you will fear dangers or this common and glorious truth that greatly helps, grants, and confers not only the popular concern but honor and fame, even eternal happiness.

We know you are noble, observe the Catholic Faith, and esteem and love the vow to our Order with all your heart. Therefore, we do not doubt that you, moved by a higher calling, will effectively carry out these commands of ours and will obey the sons of true obedience. Indeed, one can stubbornly lead an insidious life of sin without the burden of constancy or shame for an acceptable reputation, since there have been persons guilty of the above-said penalties. Opera quid amplius nam est, fratres precarissimi, aut presidium differendum neminis inimici muris urgemur eius apparatu circumdamur potentatu sola non composita non paccati sedemus animum quippe veritatis habemus nec formidamus pro christo et fide cuius que numquam defracti prout eius divino eloquio firmatum est intrepide pugnare et quaque pericula aggredi sed humana quidem auxilia imploranda sunt efficereque debemus quod industria quod conatus quod vires suppetitur ne deum temptare videamur et demum humanis viribus succursum divinum implorare auxilium presidium in qua victoria potissime consistitur. Suppleantur igitur fratres amantissimi positisque humanis affectibus fidei orthodoxe pro voto obediencie subvenite. Nec vobis terrentur itineris districtiones aut impensa a propositi abducant vel aliud quamtocius casto proposito distribuat quinymo autem reicetis obicibus atque impedimente gressus versus Rhodi valido nutriti presidio dirigite. Hec enim suadet catholica fide. Hec evocat et preponit sancta illibataque obediencia que vestram voluntatem superiorum arbitrio subierit in hoc perfecto glorioso certamine. indubitata et clarissima premia proponitur victoresque ac victi quos pro christi fide sanctissima oppetere contingit propter nominis gloriam et famam eterne vite requiem et vestri homines finem earn ipsam beatitudinem consequuntur. Non est tam grande temporale comodum quod ipsum diuinum premium impedire debeat. Si homines racione prediti si nobiles generositate cleri si religiosi obediencie subditique si denique tales site quales vos esse arbitramur scimus et diuidicamus in tam arduo quippe negocio non deeritis. non postulantur que vestra sunt repetit profecta religio que sua sunt et vobis ad tempus commendata que sine constancia gravissimo onere et reatus culpa retinere non potest insuper ut omnibus inviolabiliter dicte professionis vocati et citati supplere possint et his qui per has litteras vocati sunt licenciam arrendandi et afficiandi ad duos annos petitis anticipate prioratus preceptoriarum domuum et membra eis pertinencia et premium arrendandi

recipiendi et de recepto arrendatores quasmodi licenciam et facultatem concedimus salvus initiarum dimidiarum annatarum ac omnibus impositis et imponendis Nomina fratrem vocatorum sunt hec videlicet….

Indeed, distinguished brothers, what work there is to be done! We are not urged by any of the enemy to speed up garrisoning the walls; we are surrounded by his powerful armaments and we remain neither settled nor at peace. We have the spirit of truth; we do not fear for Christ or his faith, which has never broken down. His divine word alone strengthens one to fight intrepidly and to confront dangers of any kind. But we must provide the human aid that must be invoked. What labor, what effort, what exertions are at hand so that we may not seem to tempt God, but to implore divine succor at last, together with human strength, for the help and protection on which victory is chiefly based. Therefore, beloved brothers, may you fulfill this and, after you have placed human emotions at the disposal of the orthodox faith, come fulfill your vow of obedience. You should not fear the hardships of the journey, nor the expenses withdrawn by decree, nor those distributed at once by a pious intention. After flinging aside your objections and hindrances, direct your steps to Rhodes supported by a strong detachment. The Catholic Faith encourages it. It evokes and proclaims those with the pure and holy obedience that will subject your will to the judgment of your superiors. The undoubted and most glittering prize is proclaimed for this perfect and glorious struggle. This happens to victors and vanquished who clash with each other for the most sacred faith of the Christ because they strive after glory and fame of reputation and your men seek the repose of eternal life and their final happiness. There is no such great temporal advantage that should stand in the way of this divine reward. If men are endowed with reason, if nobles with nobility, if clerics are subject to religious obedience, we know, consider, and judge that you, if you are disposed as they are, will not fail in such an arduous undertaking. Your men should not be drafted, but for the time being the Order claims for its own benefit those who are entrusted to you. Just as one cannot keep back from the guilt of sin without perseverance and the most strenuous effort, thus those summoned and called should be able to fulfill inviolably every part of their said profession of monastic vows. And for those who are summoned by this letter, you may claim for two years the right of leasing and renting the anticipated revenues of the priories, preceptories, houses, and properties belonging to them and of receiving the advance payment from this lease. Upon receipt, we concede the leasers this right and ability except for the first half of the annates imposed or to be imposed. These are the names of the brothers summoned; namely [list of names].

4. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson announces to all the members of the Order that the Ottotnans began besieging Rhodes on May 22.*

28 May 1480, Rhodes.

AOM387,ff. 16v-17v. Printed editions: Paoli, *Codice diplomatico,* 2:148–49,no. 125 (with errors); Setton, *Papacy and Levant,* 2:350 n. 18 (part, transcription); Philippides, *Mehmned II,* pp. 334–339.

Mandatum que turcharum adventus Rhodi applicat

Frater petrus Daubusson etc. et nos conventus etc. Universis et singulis prioribus preceptoribus et fratribus ordinis nostri ubilibet constitutis ad quos nostras peracres litteras pervenerint. Salutationem in eo qui est omni vera salus. Quod in Rhodos turcorutn tyrannus iam pridem machinaturque perficere conatus concepit olim fidei inimicus in nos et ordinem nostram inexorabile odium que pro fide christi sibi resistimus. Augetur quoque cuius insannus furor quod annos quatuor et viginti quo Constantino polis expugnata est nulla dicionis meae porcione subacta sue tyranndi vires opponimusque et recursum ipsum recusavimus. Itaque nuper ingenti classe velorum clx vel taciter parata contractisque undique copiis ex provinciis rhodo vicinis quae ex continente terraque firma devexit traicitque in insulam nostram rhodiorum agros ac urbem nostram peterit mane x kalendae junii aggressus est obsedit et circumdat comportavit ad urbem nostram oppugnandam tormentorum machinarum bombardarum lignearumque turrum ingeniorum que bellorum aptorum grandem numerum suntque in castrum in nos collocati hostes circiter lxx$^{m}$ qui nos assiduis insultibus peterunt invadunt obpugnant his profecto acri fortique animo resistimus vires quoque opponimusque et hostium conatus propulsamus divina pietate atque clemencia fecti qui sperantes in se et pro fide catholica pugnantes non deferit non senciet autem hostes cum imbello milite manum confecent autem cum molli asiatico pugnare milite militans contra pauco ingeniis bellorum machinis et bombardis. Frumentis ac munitionibus abundamus quibus hostium vires sustinere possumus et fratrum nostrarum subsidia auxilia quoque opera in quo omnis status nostri tuicionis spem constituimus. Est quoque civitate Rhodia non sine grande impensa muro vallo fossa turribus munita ornataque. Quo effectum est ut cuius potenciam non formidamus. Si modo affuerint fratrum nostrorum presidia in tempore accelerata quibus fractis hoste discedat et opinione concepta frustretur arbitratur ipse tyrannus obsidionis diuturne protractare commeatusque nostras et vires militesque nostros terere frangere attenuere studetque si qui ex suis bello cadunt alios ex continenti ducere

4. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson announces to all the members of the Order that the Ottotnans began besieging Rhodes on May 22.*

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Dispatch that the Turkish advance has reached Rhodes

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson etc. And we the convent etc. To each and every one of the priors, preceptors, and brothers of our order wherever stationed to whom our very desperate letters should come. Greetings in Him who is true salvation to all. Because by now the tyrant of the Turks has plotted to complete his efforts against Rhodes; this enemy of the faith has already conceived an inexorable hatred against us and our Order, and we have stood against him for the faith of Christ. His insane fury has been increasing since the city of Constantinople was assaulted twenty-four years ago, but during this time no portion of my authority was surrendered. We have opposed the forces of his tyranny and have blocked his return. Therefore, after recently and secretly preparing a huge fleet of one hundred and sixty ships, and then gathering troops from all the neighboring provinces of Rhodes, he transported and moved them from the continent and *terra firma* to our very ancient island of Rhodes, where he sought out our fields and city. On the morning of the tenth of the kalends of June (May 22), having gathered for the attack of our city a great number of guns, war machines, bombards, and wooden towers as well as engineers and suitable soldiers, he assaulted, besieged and surrounded it. The enemy stationed nearly 70,000 men in a camp opposite us, who sought out, invaded, and attacked us with constant assaults. We have resisted them with an efficient, energetic, and strong spirit, and have also opposed the strength and warded off the efforts of the enemy. Acting with divine piety and clemency, one who is hoping in himself and fighting for the Catholic Faith does not fail or weaken while the enemy draws up his army to fight with unwarlike military forces or waging war with Asiatic effeminacy using engines, machines of war and bombards against a few men. We have a great amount of grain and munitions with which we can hold off enemy forces and we can also do so with the help, aid, and work of our brothers in which we place hope in every aspect of our protection. With great expenses, the city of Rhodes is fortified and equipped with a wall, moat, fosse, and towers. We do not fear his power since this has been done. If the protection of our brothers should come swiftly, the enemy would withdraw after his plans were

overthrown. After the tyrant conceived this idea, he was disappointed and thought by extending the siege he might wear down, dash to pieces, and reduce our supplies, forces, and soldiers. If he desired to lead others from the mainland to replace those who et prostratorum loco sufficere nostram communitatem putat posse rerum potiri fallitur quippe hic furibundus draco nec videt.

S(ancte) d(omine) n(ostre) B(aetitudinis) V(irginis) que ecclesie ac sanctissimorum regum catholicorumque principum auxilia presens futura et nobis suffragatura ignorat quaque fratrum conmilitionumque nostrorum in fidem catholicam ardentissimum zelum veram obedenciam integram observanciam que nulla parte caput et arcem ordinis nostre urbem Rliodiam periclitari sencit nec intelligit, hostis fidei qui nos oppugnant aditum portus nostri cuique petere nec prohiberi ab eo posse flante zephiro estivo autumnalique tempore qui navigantes folliantes et perspicaces dum fretum liciurn quod nostram insulam alit intrant in eum portum Rhodii prospero cursu impellit, fratres dilectissimi. Haec sunt que dudum litteris nunciis et mandatis v fraternitatibus significavimus et ob qua auxilia imploravimus in quibus prestruendis nonnulli defides fuerunt pertinaciores que putaverimus semper vos monuimus accersivimus vocavimus ut adessent presidio data sunt verba nec creditum est dicta veracilia. Vero igitur amplius est prestolandum nec de obsidione ambigendum. Credite factisque fidem monitis ac verbis non prestitis hostes fidei turci immanes nos magno impetu oppugnant obsidiunt circumdantes machinis bombardis et ingeniis bellorum instrumentis invadunt quibus resistimus et virilter ictus repellimus sed putant diuturnam obsidionem non posse sustinere prius quoque quondam adsint auxilia credunt victores evadere fratres precarissimi indetur periculum quod instat et imminet amplius siquidem non est differendum. Subvenite ergo atque ei ordini. Succurrite qui vos nutrivit aluit et cum honores evexit oppugnatur Rhodia urbs caput et arx reus et honor religionis nostre et ecclesie in oriente christicolarum refugium asilum et domicilium est cum hec urbs antiqua priscorum monumentorum celebrata cum loci oportunitate cum edificiorum magnificencia cuius ad naviles usus aptissima miris laudibus predicta. Ne igitur tam grave vuinus quod deus avertat christiana nomine contingat, omnes et singulos reverendos priores bauluios preceptores ac fratres ordinis nostri ubilibet constitutos monuimus citamus et si opus sit in vim obediencie precipimus et mandavimus ut quantocius in subsidium Rhodie urbis a turco obsesse cum nauticis onerariis miiite frumento armis et bombaris munitis atque suffultis accedant nec formident obsidionem. Ipso namque invito inimico aditus portus num subire possunt si id fecerit fratres dilectissimi alteram meritam nostri clerici quod inde sequunturi est implere nominis famam et gloriam adipiscamini que voce nostre post victoriam withdrew from this war, and to transform our

community into a ruined place, he will be deceived that he can gain control of these things. Yet the raging dragon does not see this.

He is ignorant of the present and future aid as well as the protection of Our Holy Lord, the Blessed Virgin, the most holy and Catholic Church and of its kings and princes as well as of the most ardent zeal, true obedience and complete observance of our brothers and fellow knights. This enemy of the faith, who has attacked us, does not understand and realize that he neither endangers in any way the headquarters and citadel of our order, the city of Rhodes. Nor could those sailing (whether inexperienced or skilled) be blocked during the seasons of summer and autumn from entering the strait of Lycium that nourishes our island, because the blowing of the warm west wind, most beloved brothers, drives ahead with a favorable course into this port of Rhodes. Not long ago we informed the membership of five brotherhoods with letters, messengers, and commands concerning these matters, and in these we have implored that assistance must be prepared. There were some faithless men, whom we have always considered skinflints, and we have thus advised, summoned, and called you so that promises given for the protection are sincere and should be believable. The fact of the siege must not be anticipated or doubted any longer. Believe these actions, warnings, and words that are not superior to the faith: the cruel Turks, enemies of the faith, are attacking and besieging with great force. Surrounding us, they attack with guns, bombards, and engines of war. We have resisted these and manfully repelled their blows, but they believe that we cannot sustain a long siege, and they believe that they will be victors before any help arrives. Therefore, most dear brothers, to avoid the danger, which is immanent and threatening, aid must not be put off any longer. And thus help this Order! Come to the aid of that which nursed and reared you! The city of Rhodes, the headquarters and citadel, the vow-fulfiller and honor of our community and Church, the refuge, asylum, and home of Christians in the east, was attacked just when it accomplished great success. This ancient city had been famous due to the extraordinary praise of its antique monuments, the convenience of its site, and the magnificence of its structures that were extremely well suited to naval matters. Therefore, so that a grave wound (God forbid!) should not occur to the name of Christ, we advise and summon each and every one of the reverent priors, bailiffs, preceptors, and brothers of our Order wherever stationed. If it is necessary, in the force of obedience, we order and command that they should come with naval transports, military forces, grain, weapons, bombards, munitions, and supplies as soon as they can to aid the city of Rhodes, which is being besieged by the Turks. They should not fear the siege since they can enter the port even if the enemy does not want them to. If this is done, dear brothers, our clergy shall fulfill another act of merit, and you may gain glory and fame for your name.

And all those who rose up to our summons and come according to their oath, after the victory you may surguntur gloriosi et preclari toti orbi erunt si que iure accedunt ut belli casus plerumque affert.

Dyademate martiri coronemur. Quid sanguis solvatis que fidei tueri orthodoxani. Quid jocundius quam pro Christo pugnare. Quid preclarius quem reefficere quod verbis in assumptiones habitus ordinis nostre polliceinur. Non est animus que ab hoc brevi glorioso certamine excusare possit nec senex nec debiles nec pauperes nullus animus que juvencus qui robusta qui opulentes. Si ab aliquo auxilium imploramus indubiter ab tempore ea rcquiramus qui dignitates qui opes ipsi ordinis possident, qui personaliter adesse debent ut ceteri exempli allecti quantocius succurrandi accedant verisimiliter. Ac enim oneribus subsidiorum et auxiliorum que imploramus vocati fratres nostri subvenire possunt eis et licenciam facultatem arrendandi affectandi ad tres annos pecuniis anticipatis preceptorias, prioratus baulias domus et membra soluis habitus numero communi thesauri ac demandas augmentur. Sancte Paternitatis queritatur et deliberatur consilio implimur concedimus et damus. Juramus rei testimonium bulla nostre conventus plumbeam punctibus est appensa. Datum Rhodie in nostrum conventum die xxviii mensis Maii Anno incarnationis Jesu Christo domino nostro MIII octagesimo. attain fame and glory through the entire world, as happens to many through the fortune of war.

May we be crowned with the diadem of a martyr. How much blood will you spend to protect the orthodox faith? What is more pleasant than to fight for Christ? What is more distinguished than to redeem those vows we promised in the ceremony when we assumed our habit? No soul, whether old, poor, young, strong, or rich, can be excused from this brief and glorious struggle. If we presently implore help from anyone, we will designate who should remain in possession of the properties and wealth of this order and who should come personally so that certain ones, chosen by example, should likewise come to our aid at once. And indeed with the burdens imposed by the aids and subsidies we have called for, our brothers who have been summoned can assist themselves with license and permission to lease and rent for three years the anticipated revenues due to the preceptories, priories, bailiwicks, houses, and properties; they may increase their claims to the number of habits sold from the common treasury. After the counsel of the Holy Father was sought and discussed, we give, fulfill, concede, and grant this; we swear to the authenticity of this matter by having the lead seal of our community affixed through holes [in the document]. Issued at Rhodes in our community on the twenty-eighth day of the month of May in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1480.

5. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson issues orders to the commanders of the triremes in the Priory of Castile, Portugal, England, and the Castellany of Amposta.*

6 September 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, ff. 17v-18v.

Facta sunt alia mandata scripta in simili forma etc. Mandatum patribus carissimis classe triremorum. Pro prioratu. castelle

Fr. Petrus Daubusson etc et nos conventus etc venerandi ac religioso sollempno vobis peritissim fratre Dompno alvaro de sanyuglia prioratus nostri castelle et legionis priori nostro que locumtenenti. Salutem in domino et nostris obedire xnandatis licet cum dei clemencia pro cuius fide contra nominis christiani infamissimas hostes turcos secte mahomete initiatores pugnamus in Rhodiorum truculentissima obsidione viribus iuxta facultates adhibere habueramus: fauore divino abiungit de turco nuper gloriosam reportauerimus victoriam: quem admodum et litteris et nunciis vobis et ceteris significavimus ut merito de frustra grande relato omissa: cuncti ordinis nostri professores et religiosi magna affici leticia debeant. Tamen non nisi cordis gravi anxietate atque displicencia moueri possumus cum tarn oportuno tempori gloriosoque certamine permores cuius ordinis religiosos ad hoc accersites defuisse conspicamus: qui nobis vocantibus qui a subditis nostris subsidium implorantibus: qui ab hoste triremibus prostolabantur heu gravem sortem defuerunt cernere signas tuicioni fidei catholice ascripti qui tam iusto bello premium eternum et honorem sempiternum adepturi erant. prebuerunt que pene subsidiorum exspectatorum spem inanem unum quaque opinione apud hostem attenueruntur unde tempus querelandi in contumaces relinqui indetur. actamen querelis omissis postquam sors ita miles et sapiencia divina destinavit nos pauco militum numero pene hostium infinitum numerum superasse decreuimus iterato prestantes religiosos vocare ut si quid preterita negligencia macule contraxerint posteria diligencia famam amplicent relinquitur quale onus et sarcina que sublevari humeris fratrum nostrorum opportet et viribus defendi. Imminet quippe et propinquum est quod in nos turcorum tyrannus molitur ex priori quidem repulsa propulsa hac nostra uictoria perita tantam concepit dolorem ut non pacium stabilitata moveatur: augetur que ipsius in nos furor et dimencia et prout litteris et nunciis nobis significatum est maxime a perfugis exercitus inter quos quidam consilio et prudencia graves comperti sunt decrevit haud dubio vere proximo classem ingentem impavide et in rhodios mittere suaque punicia id exsequuntur et obsidionem facturam quo

5. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson issues orders to the commanders of the triremes in the Priory of Castile, Portugal, England, and the Castellany of Amposta.*

6 September 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, ff. 17v-18v.

Another command was made written in the same form, concerning the fleet of triremes. For the Priory of Castile

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson etc. and we the convent etc. to you the venerable religious, solemn, and wise brother, Fra Alvaro de Sanyglia, our prior of the priory of Castile and Léon and our lieutenant. Salutations in the Lord and may it be permitted to obey our commands with the clemency of God, for whose faith we have fought the most savage siege of the Rhodians, applying our resources according to our strength, against the most infamous enemies of the Christian rite, the Turks, initiates of the sect of Muhammad. We have recently reported a glorious victory over the Turks, that is due to divine favor. We have just reported to you and others by letters and messengers so that, justifiably omitting the larger narrative as useless, all of the professants and clergy should be moved with great joy. Nevertheless, we are also affected by the anxiety and displeasure of a heavy heart since we see that even with such a suitable period and glorious struggle, the very foolish members of this Order summoned to this contest have failed to respond. Those who we had summoned were implored to give help for our subjects and those who anticipated the enemy's triremes; alas, they who would obtain the eternal prize and everlasting honor in such a just war failed to recognize the signals issued for the protection of the Catholic Faith. They almost surrender to the foolish hope of expecting reinforcements and that the military forces of the enemy were diminishing. I have omitted mentioning the period of grumbling that was instilled among the defiant ones. Nevertheless, once the complaints were laid aside, then destiny and divine wisdom appointed us as a soldier and, with a small number of troops, we have set out to conquer an almost infinite number of enemy and we have once more decided to summon outstanding clerics so that in eradicting the stain of past negligence they should increase their fame with future diligence. Indeed the burden and load remains, and it is fitting that the strong arms of our brothers should give help and their power should give defence. Indeed, the tyrant threatens and is very close to attacking us; for after being driven back and repulsed by our skillful victory, he has conceived such great grief that he has not been moved to establish peace and his fury and madness have increased. This has been reported to us by letters and messengers and especially by deserters from his army, among whom there were discovered certain men who gave outstanding advice and wisdom. Without doubt, he is determined to send a huge fleet against Rhodes next spring, and he would set out to fulfill this punishment and to complete this siege so that maiori animo et

pondere bellica usus comparentur sed direxit qui armos recusant quomodo de future necessario judicium fit nequequam de futuro iudicamus: sed humane coniecture demonstrant quid prudentes viri agere debeant si per comparacionem preteritorum ad futuram iudiciam humanis res nos disponent prudencie initus interiret: letteris et nunciis sepius siguificauimus turcum in nos classem prepotentem missurum quod plerique non crediderunt et tamen missa est nosque oppugnavit et grandia mala intulit. Si alii non credidissent nec pro futuro prouisione facta extitisset actum de nobis erat. fides igitur in his damnum non affert incredulcius interitum parit. Nec est enim dicendum a prudente non putavit Cum igitur verbis fidem non adipiscibantur factis credat nec opinetur turcum minatorem aut non irritatum seu provocatum esse que obsidionem esse quinyimo multis modis irritatus censetur: ob quod non est ambigendum tyrannum insolentem superbum et potentissimum paciencia usurum: qui et minimas iniurias ulcisti consuerunt. his causis impulsi omne diligencia et conatu statuimus fortificationibus demolicionum iuncti auxilia quoque implorare prestantesque nostros religiosos ad nos accire: que subsidio adsint nec est enim prostolandus hostium aduentus aut obsidio: nam potencia magna est et vehemens nec in tempore, vires celerissimo accelerandum est nec diucius exspectandi quinyimo quantocius adesse oportet talker que vere proxime futuro presencia religiosorum nostrorum utamur iniquorum spe vivimus et hanc civitatem tutamur in qua salutis nostre status constitutur quemadmodum hec et ampliora Vir Fidelis pro sua prudencia dignoscit atque deiudicat que his rebus plurimum pro vestram presenciam proficere poteste ad que vere obediencie vinculo astrictus est. Ea propter sine presencie iniurie deliberato consilio matura deliberacione perhabita non obstantibus quibusuis letteris aut graciis exemptionum a profectione de ultramarina vobis facit vos qui preservancia sapiencia rerum que experiencia pelagi ad hoc tam gloriosum et celebre certamen accimus vocamus et appellamus. Exortamur summopere et si opus sit in vim vere obediencie sub pena privationis habitus ac beneficiorum damnate que rebellionis vobis iniugentes et mandamus et percipimus his nostris letteris receptis vos omnem contradictione et dilatione cessante ad profectionem ultramarinam distinatis et preparetis ad Rhodum personaliter cum decente comitiva armis subitis et munitionibus venatis accedere que repentine. Ita que omne reiecto impedimento difficultate et excusacione per totam mensam marcii proxime futuri Rhodi adesse debeatis et teneatis quod si complere aut facere recusaretis neglexeritis aut non affueritis penam privationis habitus et beneficiorum eo ipso incurre conficiuntur in the practices of war would be carried out with greater spirit and power. Yet he directed those who refuse to serve how he might make a judgment concerning future necessity, even though we have not yet made any judgments about the future. They demonstrate by human conjecture what wise men must do if, by

comparison with the past, human matters shall dispose us to future judgment and one should enter the portal of wisdom. We have very often reported by letters and messengers that the Turk was about to send a very powerful fleet against us, but many do not believe this, even though the fleet has been dispatched, has attacked us, and caused great damage. Even if others have not believed this or made no provisions for the future, we have carried these out. Thus, faith did not cause damage in these matters, but incredibly yields to this destruction. Faith did not consider what a wise man had to say. Therefore, since it believes that they will not obtain faith through words but through actions, it did not think that the Turk was a threat or was stirred up or provoked, but rather it thought that a siege would stir him up in many ways. Nor should it be doubted that the insolent, arrogant, and very powerful tyrant, who is accustomed to avenge minor injuries, will not exercise patience. Influenced by these reasons and after the fortifications had been destroyed, we, with all diligence and effort, decided to implore, aid, and summon our outstanding clerics to us. They should be present with military aid, and they must not await the arrival or siege of the enemy. Indeed his power is great and violent. Our forces must speed up. For how much longer are they to be waited for? Likewise, it is fitting for them to be present as soon as possible and that we should benefit from the presence of our hostile clerics in the near future. We live in this hope and protect this city, in which the foundation of our safety is established. We do this so that a faithful man might have his wisdom more fully understood and be resolved to accomplish more with your presence, due to the bond of true obedience. Therefore after consulting concerning the present damage and after having mature counsel and deliberation and regardless of any letters of exemption from the maritime expedition issued to you, we call, summon, and direct you, because of your perseverance and wisdom of things and experience of the sea, to such a glorious and distinguished struggle. We greatly exhort and (if it should be necessary, by force of true obedience inflicting on you the penalty of deprivation of habit and of benefices and that punishment for insubordination) we command, and order that once you have received our letter and put off all opposition and delay, you should arrange and prepare to come to Rhodes as quickly as possible in person with a suitable troop, weapons, supplies, and munitions. Thus rejecting every impediment, difficulty, or excuse, you must and are obliged to come to Rhodes during the entire month of next March. If you should refuse, neglect, or not be present to complete or fulfill this, the penalty of the deprivation of the habit and benefices will be carried out against you. In such a case of contumacy against you, we will take legal action or will have it taken quo casu contumacie contra vos tamquam contra inobedientes et rebellentes mandatorum que nostrorum contemptores vestram contumaciam

in aliquo non obstante procedamus procedique faciamus et de prioratibus et beneficiis ac preceptoriis providemusque et eas obediencie confercius insuper ut onera itineris radius supportare valeatur serie punctorum arrendandi et affictandi personis vobis beneficatasque equestrias et preceptorias ad annos tres pecuniis anticipatis saluis et reservatis nostri comuni thesauri impositis et imponendis facultatem licentiam et auctoritatem damus concedimus et donamus intuitu rei testimonium bulla nostre conventus plumbea punctibus est appensa. Datum Rhodis in nostra conventu die vi septembris anno ab incarnatione domini mille iiii lxxxx. against your insubordination, in the same way as against the disobedient and rebellious and those who spurn our commands in any way whatsoever. We are providing for the priories, benefices, and preceptories and it is likewise right to support those full of obedience for the burdens of the round trip. We give, concede, and grant to you in person by a series of articles the right, permission, and authority of leasing and renting the anticipated revenues from the equestrian benefices and preceptories for three years except for those imposed and to be imposed by our common treasury and in testimony of this matter the lead seal of our community has been affixed by holes [in the parchment]. Issued at Rhodes in our community on the sixth day of September in the year of the incarnation of the Lord 1480.

(The same letter was sent to the Castellan of Amposta and the priors of Castile, Portugal, and England.)

6. Master Pierre d'Aubusson comments on the past siege and reports news that the Ottomans plan a new siege against Rhodes; he summons the members of the Order to come to the central convent.

23 September 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, ff. 19r-v, 23r-24r.

Mandatum veniendi ad Rhodi ultramarini

Fr. Petrus daubusson etc Et nos bauillivi priores preceptores et fratres in congregacione seu assemblea publica sollemniter more solito congregati, Venerandi ac religiosis in Christo nobis precarissimis fratribus prioratus nostri francie priori preceptoribus et fratribus dicti prioratus Salutem in domino et nostris obedire mandatis. Solent qui rerum publicarum gubernacula gerunt pro temporum causarum que qualitate et ingruencia de publicis negociis ac agendis statum concernentibus providere ordinare disponere subiacant profecta queque genita mobilitati que in infinitum decurrit inferiora quoque alterat et varias rebusque fluentibus pro conditione temporis. humana

prudencia divino adiuta presidio medetur hinc statuta variantur hinc mores decedunt hinc leges alterautur alia quoque. Iuramenta et constituciones succedunt emergunt surgunt sic nostri antecessores sic nostri maiores sic veteres gubernacula tenerunt et pro nostrorum temporumque qualitate publica munera obiecerunt perfecerunt exaruerunt. Nullo ergo mirum videri debet si et nos hodierna tempestata multis iactati in comodis status eius ordinis cuius gubernacula tenemus pro necessitata providemus Etsi nostris maioribus et predecessoribus expediens ac necessarium fuerit multotiens causis contingentibus capitula et assembleas indicire congregare celebrare pleraque et eas prorogare seu anticipare maiore pro fecto causa nostris nobis oblata est ut Rhodie urbi presidio faciamus et de rebus communis consultemus Audemus etiam et cum veritate affirmare ordinem nostram ab eius prominencia institucionis iniquisque tantis perplexitatibus tantis periculis tantis iacturis et quam nostra iuta fuisse implicitam cuiusquidem assertionis non parva sunt indicia luce ipsa clariora adest hostis fidei catholica furore rabidus potentissimus diutissimus finitimus que ad comparandas classes ad instruendos exercitus ad machinas parandas portus passus loca aptissima tenet nec deest voluntas nobis infensissima plerisque victoriis curamus terrestris. Nam postquam turcorum tyrannus mahmetes sectator perfide prophete qua legem evangelicam prevertere student duas potentissimas imperiales sedes complura regna diutissimas urbes fertilissimas insulas subegit adeo imperium eius dilatavit ut ab oriente persas mesopotameos et medos ab occidente hungaros longe terrarum tractu distantes contingat mari euxine meotidi paludi propontide helesponto egeo yonio que pelago imperat ubi

6. Master Pierre d'Aubusson comments on the past siege and reports news that the Ottomans plan a new siege against Rhodes; therefore, he summons the members of the Order to come to the central convent.

23 September 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, ff. 19r -v, 23r-24r.

Command for coming across the sea to Rhodes

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson. Etc. And we, the bailiffs, priors, preceptors, and brothers solemnly congregated in the customary manner in a congregation or public assembly. To the venerable religious brothers in Christ (who are most dear to us) and to the prior and preceptors of France and to the brothers of the same priory. Salutations in the Lord and obedience to our commands. Those who administer the rule of public affairs are accustomed to the nature, the approach, and the causes of that time when those who conduct the affairs of the state provide for, order, and arrange for that which pertains to the common

good. Human wisdom, aided by divine help, here issued statutes and there the customs varied; here laws fell into disuse and there they change as other oaths and constitutions succeeded, emerged, and arose. Thus our ancestors, predecessors, and the ancients maintained governments and, like the nature of our times, they stood in the way, brought to an end, and exhausted public responsibilities. Therefore, it must not seem amazing to anyone if we, harassed by daily concerns, have provided for the necessities that are appropriate for the good state of this order, the rule of which we are bound to carry out. And if it was expedient and necessary for our ancestors and predecessors to frequently call together, summon, and celebrate many chapters and assemblies for pertinent reasons, now a cause for greater advantage is offered us to prorogue and celebrate early such meetings so we may act for the assistance of the city of Rhodes and consult concerning matters that are common to us. We also dare to affirm with truth our order, with its prominence as an institution and in the face of such evil and great confusions, dangers, and assaults, that there are many indications of such an assertion, bound to our help that approaches like a clear light. The extremely powerful enemy, maddened by a frenzy against the Catholic Faith, occupied passes, ports, and very suitable sites; readied fleets from far and near; drew up armies and prepared war machines. Nor did we lack an extremely aggressive spirit and we made very many preparations for earthly victories. For the tyrant of the Turks, follower of the faithless prophet Mohammed who wished to overturn the Biblical law, had conquered two imperial capitals, very many realms, extremely rich cities, and fertile islands. He extended his empire so far that, stretching by a long section of land in the east from the territories of the Persians, Mesopotamians, and Medes and in the west to those of the Hungarians; it bordered on the swamps of the Black Sea. He ruled the Marmara, Hellespont, Aegean, and Ionian seas where sue classes intrepide vagari possunt hinc videre possimus eius dicionis amplitudinem qua superbimus inqui indecorum que diudicat Rhodiam urbem sive potentata cinctam et admodi finitima suo imperio inimunem esse voluit. Itaque iam pridem circa eius urbis excidium nephandum annum eamque hac estate proxime decursa grandiore potentata aggressus est quemadmodum diffuse viris fidelibus litteris et nunciis significavimus extantque de gestis scripta nupperchiam memoriam edita quare ea in presentis reticere libet historiam namque scribere non statuimus sed arduis agendis providere et commilitones nostras monere ut oculis aptis intellectu passione libere ordinem succurrere animo prompto studeant. Quot damna quot iacturas quot populaciones quot vastaciones quot clades quot ruinas quot demoliciones propotentes inimica classis obsidioque autulerit dederit inerint non dicamus libet enim preterere que totidens orbi scriptis et nunciis nota sunt hinc equites nostri qui aftueruntur cesi lacerati vulnerati fatigati cives incole damno vulneribus

parentum liberorum uxorum morte affecti hinc agri vici casalia castella prostrata destructa conspiciuntur nos fruentes faventes divina clemencia post tot malorum turbulentia condicionem gloriosam de hoste adepti sumus victoriam ex quo insolentissimus hostis tantum odium in nos concepit ut non aliud quam ad injuriam ulciscendam excogitare possit destinavitque suis posihabitis ceteris et contemptis finitimis aeste proximo potenti manu inanem enim urbem rhodiam aggredi que pusilla et sibi finitima eius superbiam propulsavit putavitque tam grandem imperium a se petitum nullo pacto sibi sufficere nisi Rhodiorum urbem quam Romani olim potentes magnificaverunt subiugavit expugnavit et sue pro dictionis fecerit decrevit quoque sua corporali presentia exercitum munire affirm antes suos vassus et prefectos imbecilles imperitosque fuisse que cum tam potenti apparatu de urbe victoriam non reportaverat nil quoque in constantinopoli aliud fertur nisi de Rhodiorum futura obsidione assiduaque illic machine deni fusa videntur triremes reficiuntur arma paruntur que nobis dies noctesque negociatorum litteris nunciis exploratoribus nota redduntur. Nos vera ad tantam potenciam propulsandam turres machinis diruptas muros concussos et edificia prostrata reficimus restauramus minimus presidium subsidiumque fratrum nostrum prostolantes qui eum ab incolis civibus commilitonibus nostris summo cum ardore expectantur desiderantur prestolantur ut Rhodie urbi capiti et arci religionis nostre christiane enim domicilio pauperum asillo subvenitur succurritur auxilentur ad quod et tutandi laici et qui ei ordini ascripti non sunt accedant qui profecto attonere debent et qui religionis professionem his ships could travel undisturbed. Everywhere, we can see the extent of his authority and we pride ourselves as enemies of this shameful rule. He concluded that the city of Rhodes, even though his neighbor and wholly encircled by his power, wished to be free from his rule. Thus, last year, he caused shameful destruction around this city and in the next summer, hastening with an even larger force, he attacked as we have profusely informed the faithful men by letters and messengers. We pass over current matters in silence, having already written about these events and having reported on matters that still exist in recent memory. At this point, we have decided not to write this history, but to see to the completion of arduous matters and to warn our fellow knights to come to the aid of the order with their eyes pealed and their intellects freed from passion. We cannot express, however, how much damage, destruction, depopulation, devastation, loss, ruin, and demolition the powerful enemy fleet carried out, brought about, and caused in this siege. We omit that which was reported to everyone so many times before, through missives and messengers, the adversities that our Knights suffered: killed, maimed, wounded, and exhausted; and likewise those experienced by our townsmen and inhabitants; plus all the damages and wounds inflicted upon children and wives. Here,

fields, villages, farmhouses are seen destroyed, but we, enjoying and favored by divine clemency, have gained a state of most glorious victory over the enemy after the violence of so many evils. Because of this, the most insolent enemy conceived such great hatred that he could think of nothing else but avenging this injury. He decided to attack the weakened city of Rhodes with a powerful force from certain of his nearby small strongholds. He defended his arrogance and thought that no great empire that he sought after was in any way large enough for him unless he subjugated, assailed, and brought under his control the city of Rhodes (which the powerful Romans had once prized so highly). He also decided to bolster his army by being present in person, strengthening his common soldiers and commanders alike who were weak and inexperienced. When, with such powerful equipment, he had not sent back news of victory over the city and no other word was brought back to Constantinople except for a future siege against Rhodes, war artillery is seen being cast there ten at a time, triremes refitted, and weapons prepared. This same information comes to us day and night from the letters of merchants and from spies. We are indeed refitting, repairing, and fortifying towers destroyed, walls shattered, and buildings knocked down by artillery to repel such a great force. At the same time, we expect the aid and reinforcements of our fellow brother Knights who our inhabitants, townsmen, and fellow Knights await, long for, and expect with great eagerness, so that aid, succor, and help should be given to Rhodes, the headquarters and citadel of our Christian religion and also the domicile and asylum of the poor. To protect it, laymen and those who are not enrolled in our Order should come and then truly they must be given a tonsure just as those who were administered the vow of the emiseruntur. Hinc enim tam gravi incomodo et uulneri rnedere non possuimus nisi fratrum et conmilitonum nostrorum assistencia presentia consilio et favore ut comunis status communibus viribus defendatur. Que cum ita sunt venerandi fratri ut de rebus ardenssimis consultemus et tuicioni nostri ordinis intendamus invicem matura deliberacione discussione que prehabita in publica assemblea in ecclesia sancti Johannis collaci Rhodi ad sonum campane more et loco solito celebrata congregati habito super his anni assistencium suftragis per valetarum scrutinium. Ordinamus decernimus et statuimus capitulum generale futurum pro annum anticipantur que ipsum corporalem in Rhodo prima die rnensis Septembris proxime futurum M iiiic lxxx primi celebretur quamquidem diem ad ipsum capitulum celebrandum deputamus assignamus prefigimus. Sed quia prevenientes ab hoste et adesse Rhodi oportet antequam classis Rhodi obsessura adveniat nec per inuriam aut negligenciam sinistrum aliquod subsequatur, ordinamus volumus et precipimus que fratres qui ad capitulum ipsum vocatur et in eo interesse debeant ac et in presidium nostrum vocati in conclusione harum litterarum nostrarum nominati quantocius Rhodi accedatur

ut per totum mensem marcii aut aprilis proxime futuram Rhodi adsint nec diutius expectent inimicum namque vigilat et ruine nostre intendit proponitque anno aeste proximo cum potenti manu adesse scimus tamen aliquos non deesse sicut ante preteritam obsidionem non defueruntur qui dicunt de futuro quod deus obscura caligine occulavit non diudicare opportere quare nonnulli fidem mandatis nostris non adhibueruntur parere que neglexerunt unde non parvam fame maculam contraxeruntur et ingravissimas penas incideruntur. Non enim de futuris iudicamus sed humana prudencia ex preteritis putantibusque coniecturis et casibus in futuros eventus providet fides hie damnum non aftert incredulitas cladem quando que parturit. Nequamque enim de sapientie dicendam est. Non putavimus si ceteri non putassent urbis Rhodie indemnitati non providessent sic quoque status incredulitate interibat que fides et creduiitas divino favente auxilio servavit. Quis dicere audebit hostem toti orbi formidolosum potentem divitem et propinquum tanta iniuria provocatum vulnus suum si poterit non curaturum qui tot provincias sibi adeat et Rhodiorum dicionem illesam liberamque conspicit Non est hie ambiguimus non est hie dubietas non est hie incertitudo providendum quippe est in tempore ne status nostri arcis et basis quod deus avertat per neglieneiam ruris labatur pareat invigilare debent tanta redimiti vobis astricti milieiaque decorati ad custodiam et tuicionem tam clare urbis tam preeellentis domicilii quod antiquorum monumentis tantis celebratur preconis est cum nobilissimio situ ea urbs posita medioque pene quarti climatis Order. We cannot heal such a serious festering wound here except with the assistance, presence, counsel, and favor of our brothers and fellow Knights so our common condition should be defended by our common forces. And since matters are such, venerable brothers, after holding mature and mutual deliberation, we intend to celebrate, convene, and hold a public assembly for the assistance and scrutiny of the events taking place in this year in the Church of Saint John in the collachio of Rhodes, in the customary manner and location with the ringing of bells, so that we may consult about the very pressing matters concerning the defense of our order. We ordain, decree, and rule that this chapter general should anticipate the chapter general for next year, and this body should be celebrated at Rhodes on the first day of the month of next September of 1481, and we designate, decide, and establish that the chapter be celebrated on that day. Since it is fitting to act in advance of the enemy and be ready at Rhodes before the arrival of the enemy fleet, which is about to besiege Rhodes, and so nothing unfortunate may come about from injury or negligence, we ordain, wish, and order that the brothers called to this chapter should be present in it for all of the future months of March and April. Nor should they await the enemy any longer because he maintains reconnaissance over our collapse, intending and proposing to be here with a powerful force next year in the

summer. Nevertheless, we know that some of our men will not be here, just like those who did not come before the last siege, saying that God hides the future with an obscure darkness. It is not fitting to judge whether these, who were summoned by our commands, obeyed the faith or incurred a weighty stain on their reputation and extremely serious penalties. Indeed, we are not rendering judgment about the future, but whether human knowledge foresees future events from past thoughts, conjectures, and cases and in this matter whether faith causes damage, disbelief, and destruction when the situation already teems with devastation. Indeed this must in no way be said concerning wisdom. We do not think that if others had thought of themselves as exempt from service that they would have taken care of the city of Rhodes, favored by divine aid, and thus by disbelief ruined the situation that was served by belief and faith. Who will hear it said that such a powerful, rich, and nearby enemy–so dreadful to everyone and provoked by such great injury, who has established his control over so many provinces, but still sees the authority of Rhodes undiminished and free–will not tend to this wound if he can. We do not doubt that this is so; there is no doubt or uncertainty about it. Indeed, measures must be taken so the state of the citadel and its foundation should not be shaken, God forbid, by the neglect of its territory. It is obvious that those who have been hired by and are bound to you and are fitted out with such a great army must be watchful for the defense and protection of such a famous city and distinguished residence, which is celebrated by public praise for the great edifices of the ancients. This city is placed nearly in the middle of an extremely noble site of four measures of land. It is cui nomine indidit sita aeris salubritate percelebre ad comparandas in hostem classes aptissima ex qua inimicus facile oppugnari et magnus incomodus affici potest, servare igitur fratres carissimi curetis ornatissimum domicilium xnagno labore partum cusroditurn defensum posthabitisque deliciis consanguinearum que amplexibus et conversacionibus delictisque rectis relictis ad Rhodiam tutandum fratres nostri accedant a cuius fonte emolumenta promociones et dignitates habueruntur. Custodite fratres carissimi earn urbem que vos custodit earn colite cpe vos honorat earn protegite que vos nutrit pro fide christi id aggreditum quod olim gentiles per curam popularem factitaverunt pro qua mori non formidaruntur Quibus de causis mod et impulsi vobis venerandi priori serie punctorum iniungimus et mandamus ut visis punctibus omne dilacione contradiccione et excusacione site ad vos nonullis preceptoribus et fratribus euisdem prioratus he nostre littere publicentur eligantur que duo preceptores vel fratres de negociis ordinis nostri periti et armis apti qui preter eos quos in subsidium vocamus Rhodi in presidium et pro capitulo accedant receptores, atque dicti prioratus personales cuius racionibus computis et calculis accedant de tali quoque publicaciones et presentione

instrumentum coram notarie fiat hue Rhodi mandetur quo secundum rerum exigenciam providere valeamus patefaciantur fratribus in conclusione punctorum non inicibus huiusmodi littere putentur et de presentione instrumentum conficiantur quatenus de veritate et citacione nullus ignoranciam pretendere possit mandantur et precipientur religiosis qui ad capitulum vocantur eligenturque ceterisque infrascriptis in vim obedencie damnate que rebellionis sub pena privacionis habitus prioratuum castellanie emposte beneficiorum quoque et officiorum per eos in nostra religione habitorum et habendorum ut visis punctibus ad profectionem ultramarinam omne tergiversatione tergiversationis [sic] excusacione et contradictione cessante se presentent Rhodiamque accedant taliter que quamtocius hie Rhodi ad sint et omnino per totum mensem marcii aut apriiis proxime futuri inpresencia nostra Rhodi personalitur compareant. Quod si nonnulli quod non credimus contrafecerint aut adimplere neglexerint eo termino elapse absque ulteriore dilacione contra eos procedemus procedique faciemus tamque contra inobedientes et rebelles mandatorum que nostrorum contemptores ad privacionem habitus prioratus castellanie emposte et preceptoriarum contumacia eorum in aliquo non obstante ac prioratus preceptorias et beneficia sit vacati ceteris obediencibus fratribus conferamus qui subsidio nostra adsint et rebus ordinis nostri faveatur impravorum sugillacionem confusionem cladem greatly renowned for the healthful quality of its air. It is well suited for supplying fleets in the midst of the enemy. From it, enemy fleets could be attacked easily and at a great disadvantage to them. Therefore, most dear brothers, you should take care to serve the distinguished domicile created, guarded, and defended with great labor. After leaving behind their holdings, and the beloved embraces and the delightful and righteous conversations of their relatives, our brothers should come to protect Rhodes from whose largess they have salaries and advances, promotions, and offices. Guard this city, most dear brothers. Take care of that which honors you. Protect that which has nurtured you. Advance for the faith of Christ because the gentiles once did so very often because of popular concern, for which they were not afraid to die. Moved and impelled by these reasons, we have ordered and commanded you, venerable priors, by a series of articles. Once you see these, and after our letters are made public to some of the preceptors and brothers of your priory, no excuse for delay or contradiction is left to you. Two preceptors or brothers experienced in the business of our Order and in arms (not including those whom we have summoned in support) should be chosen and should come to Rhodes for the chapter as a garrison and receivers. The said person for each priory should bring the accounts of their calculations of the revenues and imposts specified in such publications and the instrument of introduction that should be drawn up before a notary. It should be sent here to Rhodes so we

may be able to act according to the demands of circumstances. It should be made clear to the brothers listed at the end of the articles and not in the salutations of letters of this kind that everyone is commanded to avoid feigning ignorance about the rightful summons by these letters of introduction. So that none can claim ignorance, it should be commanded and ordered that the clerics who are summoned and elected for the chapter, and certain others (written below) condemned by the force of obedience and by rebellion, subject to the deprivation of habit, the benefices of the Priory of the Castellany of Amposta, and the offices held by them now or in the future. They should all present themselves at Rhodes after seeing the articles and ceasing all evasion and excuse of evasion and contradiction. Likewise they should come to Rhodes at once. You should come personally into our presence during the upcoming months of March and April. But if some-and this something we do not believe possible-shall act to the contrary and neglect to carry out this order, once the time-limit has passed and with no further delay, we will take action and have legal proceedings taken against them just as against the disobedient and rebellious and those contemptuous of our commands. In accordance with the penalty of deprivation of the habit and for their insubordination to the Priory of the Castellany of Amposta and to the preceptors in anything whatsoever, we declare that the priory, preceptors, and benefices should be vacated to other obedient brothers who shall be present for our help and for that of the affairs of our order; no support should be given to the insults, confusion, destruction, atque ignominiam. Ut autem ad nos vocati profectionis oneribus subuenire possint arrendandi et affictandi prioratus cameras priorales preceptorias et beneficia ad annos tres pecuniis anticipatis salvis iuribus nostri comunis thesuri impositis et imponendis auctoritatem facultatem et potentatem concedimus damus et donamus per presentes non derogantur per hoc prius mandatur aliis mandatis per nos factis in subsidium Rhodie urbis presertim eis quid fecimus die vi septembris M iiii$^{c}$ lxxx et etiam obligationibus nonnullorum fratrum in Rhodie factarumque suo in robore promoveritur et quorum exequucio ficere possit. Taliter ergo impremissis vos exhibeatis et de vera valeatis apud nos obediencia commendita. Nominis autemeorum qui sunt vocati personaliter sequuntur videlicet venerandi fratres Bertrandus de Clunii Francie prior veneat personaliter nisi legitimo fuerit prepeditus impedimento quo in casu legitimi impedimenti mittere debeat et teneatur secundum dictamen eius recte constantiam subsidium et presidium hominum aut artelliariarum nostre urbe Rhodi visis necessitatibus incumbentibus superius explicatis ac procuratores pro capitulo mittat… prioratus prefati preceptores ac etiam duo preceptores vel fratres procuratores ipsius prioratus compte quoque eiusdem suis libris et computis omnes et singuli fratres milites conventuales dicte prioratus quorum nomina et cognomina habeantur hie pro sufficenter ex

presentis. Jurimus rei testimonium bulla nostra comunis plumbea punctibus est appensa. Datum Rhodi in nostro conventu die xxiii mensis Septembris Anno ab incarnacione domini M iiii$^{c}$lxxx.

and ignominy of evil men. We concede and grant by the present instrument the authority, permission, and power to lease and rent the anticipated monies for the priory, prioral workshops, preceptories, and benefices for three years except for rights of our common treasury to be imposed now or in the future, so that those summoned to us can be helped with the burdens of the expedition. These should not be restricted by former commands or directives we made in aid of the city of Rhodes, especially those we issued on 6 September 1480. Also, the obligations some brothers made at Rhodes will be extended in their validity and the execution of these will be fulfilled. Likewise, therefore, you especially should demonstrate and make good the true obedience you pledge before us. Moreover, of those who were summoned and those who should personally follow; namely, the venerable brother, Bertrand de Cluix, prior of France, should come personally unless he should be prevented by some excuse and in the case of a legitimate excuse he must and is bound to rightly send in accordance with his Order constant aid and help of men or artillery to our city of Rhodes. After he understands the pressing necessities which are explained above, he should send these proctors for the chapter: …preceptors of the aforesaid priory, and also two preceptors or brothers procurator of this priory and with the accounts, books, and reckonings and each and every one of the brothers and conventual knights whose full names should be recorded here sufficiently at the present time. We swear the testimony of this matter with our common lead bull affixed through holes. Issued at Rhodes in our convent on twenty-third day of September in the year of the Incarnation of the Lord 1480.

7. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson orders the brethren of the Castellany of Amposta to provide bombards for the defense of Rhodes.*

16 November 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, f. 64v-65r.

Fr Petrus Daubusson etc. Universis et singulis dilectis in Christo nobis subditis et vassallis dicte domus nostre in castellania emposte Camerisque preceptoriis et locis dicte castellanie presentibus et futuris ad quos nostras presentes letteres per [65r] venerint. Salutem et vere beatitudinis assequacionem. Non est vobis incognitum amantissimi et devotissimi in christo cum id iam toti orib notum existat et de hoc plura scripta sunt edita et per universum mundum destinata quanto impetu quanto que conatu turcorum rabies estate proxime decursa in

nos et Rhodiam urbem pervenerit quanta vi ipsam oppugnaverint et ex pugnare conata sit turres menia machinis impetuosissimis corruendo fossas complendo et queque aggredendo que usus belli esse solent quare in presencia in ea quid enarracione prolixiores non erimus quia ystoriam retexere non decrevimus sed amantissimorum. virorum. devocionibus postulare que saluti autem vestre et defensorum ipsius urbis conducere videntur. Quatenus autem turcorum potencia esset validissima et copiosa iuvit tamen iuste cause deus qui sua clemencia a perfide tyranide nos protexit nec defuit quidem humana virtus comili tones cives et subditi negociatores quoque omnis nacionis qui affuerunt supperitias et auxilia prestiterunt qui ob hoc non parvas indulgencias propter premium eternum a. sacre. domino, nostro. consecuti sunt quas patefaciuntur assequuntur qui manus adiutores eius urbis tuicioni porrigunt hoc sanciuntur bulle apostolice hoc sanciuntur privilegia hoc sanciuntur apostolica decreta. Nos igitur cupidi vestri honoris cupidi salutis cupidi iaudis vestre ad hoc premium invitamus vocamus et accersimus que omnia assequentes si urbi Rhodie iuveritur auxilium prestantes faucescuius subditi vassaile et astricti.est. Et quia ipsius urbis tuicio inter cetera potissime consistent in bombardarum iacta que inimicos a muris arcet et prohibet prout experiencia in ea obsidione donat vos de consilio venerandorum fratrum nostrorum nobis assitentes per passionem domini nostri Jhesus Christi et viscera misericordie eius monemus [h]ortamur et rogamus ut quiiibet vestrum pro eius facilitate opibus et affluencia diviciarum elargiri ordine nostre studeat bombardas spingardas ac artillariarum genus vel pecunias aut proventus pro his habendis comparandis et emendis erit profecto id maximo administratione et ornamento que omnia Rhodi conducentur ad vim turcorum propulsandam sit faciendo premium vite eterne et honoris consequimur ac vos principes indulgenciarum et gratiarum apostolicarum ordini nostri et eius benefactoribus concessarum efficacem et effectualiter erint. Scimus pro hac re plura verba scribere non esse necesse his prestissimi

7. *Master Pierre d'Aubusson orders the brethren of the Castellany of Amposta to provide bombards for the defense of Rhodes.*

16 November 1480, Rhodes.
AOM 387, f. 64v-65r.

Fra Pierre d'Aubusson, etc. to each and every one of our subjects and vassals beloved in Christ of our community in the Castellany of Amposta with the preceptories and places of the said castellany now and in the future, to whom this present letter should come. Salutations and the acquisition of true happiness. It is not unknown to you, the most beloved and devoted in Christ,

since it is already known to everyone (many writings were issued concerning this and it has been proven to everyone) that before next summer passes the madness of the Turks will come against us and the city of Rhodes with such great force and effort that an attempt will be made with very rapid-fire artillery in destroying towers and walls, filling in moats and in attacking as is usual with the custom of war. Therefore in the present discussion we will not be too wordy since we are not setting out to correct history, but to demand from the loyalty of the most beloved men that they should be seen in serving your safety and in the defenses of the city. Moreover, since the power of the Turks is so strong and abundant, nevertheless God (who from His clemency protects us from the perfidious tyrant) helps in this just cause. Nor indeed has human virtue been lacking in our fellow Knights, citizens, subjects, and merchants of every nation who have come and given us help and aid because of the massive indulgences. Those helpers who have stretched out their hands for the safety of the city have attained, have had revealed to them, and have gained the eternal reward from our Sacred Lord. And the apostolic bulls sanction this; the privileges sanction this; and the papal decrees sanction this. Desirous for your honor, your safety, and your praise, we therefore invite, call, and summon to this reward those who are pursuing everything to help the city of Rhodes by sending the aid of his subjects, vassals, and retainers across the straits. Experience has taught you that in this siege the protection of this city consists, among other things, in the discharge of bombards that hold back and block the enemy from the walls. With the advice of our venerable brothers who are supporting us, through the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the flesh of His mercy, we warn, urge, and beg you that each of your men should strive to give lavishly to our Order from his resources, wealth, affluence, and riches bombards, espingards, and other types of artillery or the money or revenues to buy or purchase them. This will be accomplished with the utmost attention to detail and equipment. They should bring everything to Rhodes for attacking the Turkish forces. We are advancing after the reward of eternal life and honor and you, desirous of indulgences and privileges for our Order and for the grant of its benefices, will effectively bring this about. We know it is not necessary to write many words about this matter to those who are qui ei ordini fidei sunt et in fidem catholicam devotissimi quot si ille qui nullo pacto eidem religioni astricti sunt id efficiant merito ea concedunt qui vassalli censentur valete felices in cuius rei testimonii bulla nostra magistrali in cera argenti puntibus est impressa Datum Rhodi in nostro conventu die xvi novembris anno ab incarnatione Domini M iiii lxxxi

extremely dedicated to the loyalty of our Order as much as they are devoted to the Catholic Faith. If there are those who are tied to this order with no

religious vow, let those vassals who are reckoned of full value act meritoriously and give them these things. In testimony of this matter our magisterial bull of silver wax was attached through holes. Issued at Rhodes in our community on the sixteenth day of November in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord, 1481 (sic).

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**Abbreviations**:

AOM =

Archives of the Order of Malta, National Library of Malta, Valletta

ISTC =

Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, British Library (istc.bl.uk)

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